

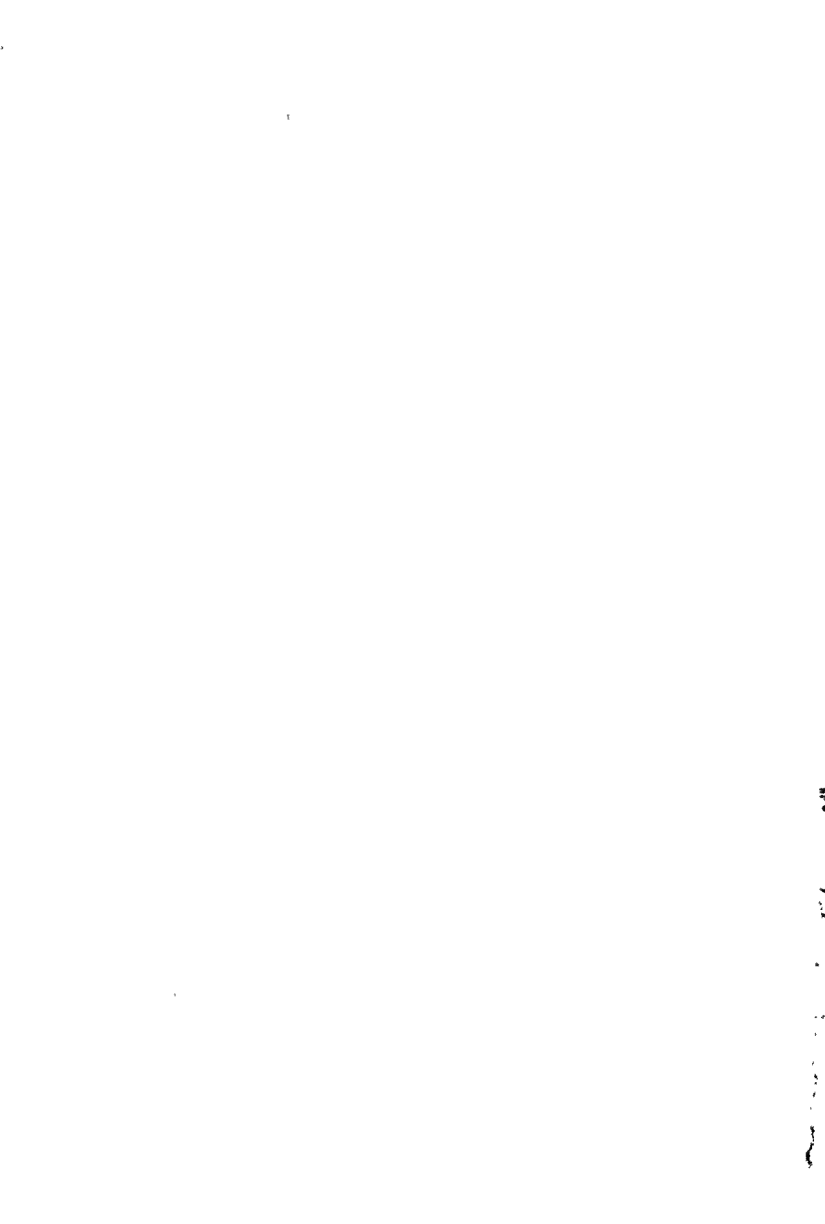
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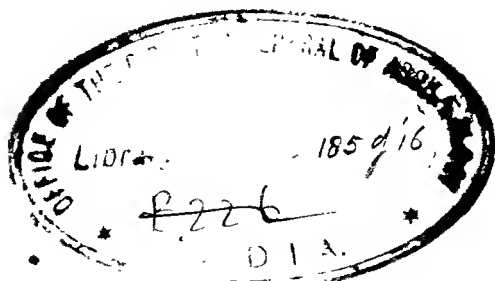
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LECTURES ON ART





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LECTURES ON ART

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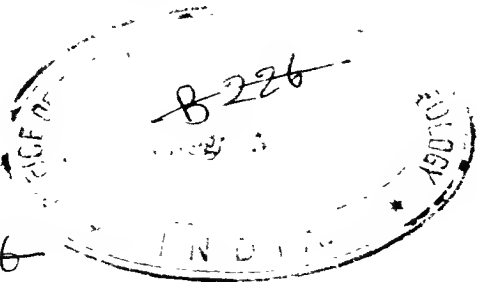
SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF
ANCIENT BUILDINGS

BY

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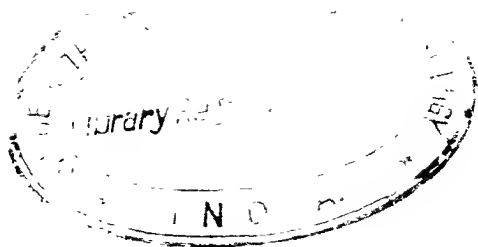


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PREFACE.

"Vitaque mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu."—LUCRETIVS.

THE various courses of action taken by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, in the struggle to preserve what yet remains to us of our monuments of Art and History, necessarily entails a certain amount of expenditure, which year by year threatens to become heavier, as the work of the Society is carried on with greater vigour, and extended over a wider field.

It was with the object of helping to provide these necessary funds that the following Lectures were organised ; and the hearty thanks of the Society are due to the lecturers for so kindly giving their services gratuitously, and also for allowing their Lectures to be printed.

The subjects treated of in this volume are very varied, and extend over a wide field of time and place.

The simple and hieratic Art of the ancient Egyptian, used chiefly as a means of expressing his hopes and fears regarding the world beyond the grave.

The great fresco paintings of Italy, executed when painter, sculptor, and architect were one; or, at least, worked together in mutual dependence and understanding.

That period of complete union of the three Arts, when each had achieved power of expression sufficient for a separate existence, and yet all worked hand in hand, acknowledging the just limits and scope of each.

The Decorative Art of the Greeks and Romans, with its splendid harmony of composition, and perfect symmetry of form.

The mediæval Parish Churches of our own country, each with a whole history written on its walls—churches which for centuries were one of the main outlets for the expression of what Art was in England,—History and Art which should be specially dear to us, and sacred beyond all other, being as they are our main inheritance from our forefathers, and bound up so closely with the life and labours of those who struggled to make this inheritance a fair and noble one.

Last, though not least, the "Lesser forms of Art"—those, that is, in which rich and poor alike have their share. Less pretending than their more aristocratic brethren, Painting and Sculpture, yet perhaps more important even than they in their contribution to the great mass of human happiness.

It is hoped that these Lectures may arouse a keener sense of the unity and solidarity of all forms of Human Art, and of the great debt we owe to those bygone generations of workers, who toiled not for themselves only, but also for us, to leave us a legacy of harmony and grace and the many things that help to make the burden of life less heavy.

Surely it is the duty of each one of us to strive that this heritage may pass on to our successors unimpaired in beauty, and no less instructive to them than it has been to us, and to fight earnestly against the modern vanity which would obliterate all traces of the bygone days when Art was living, with the dull nineteenth century stamp of feeble copyism or wilful falsification.

J. H. M.

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LECTURE I.

BY REGINALD STUART POOLE.

THE EGYPTIAN TOMB AND THE FUTURE STATE.

IT might be thought that the subject I have chosen was not altogether appropriate to the objects of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, but I think I shall be able to show you that there are no ancient buildings in the world which more claim our protection than the monuments of Egypt. It might be thought also that, in connecting the Egyptian tomb with the Egyptian doctrine of the future state, I had rather departed from the subjects of this course, which are associated necessarily with architecture and art rather than with religion ; but in the case of Egypt the future state is so intimately connected with everything the tomb contains, and with its very structure, and all the ideas which led to its compo-

sition, that I could not possibly divorce these two subjects; I could not take the lesser and leave the greater. And to show that the Egyptian tomb deserves your sympathy, I need only recount the history of its fate in different ages. I must first ask you to picture to yourself the old Egyptian chief, the aristocrat, the great landowner at Memphis, or Thebes, or in Middle Egypt, leaving his beautiful vineyards, his gardens, and his hunting-grounds, and coming day after day, or month after month, all through his lifetime, from his majority to his death, to see and work in his tomb in the desert; to sit in the gallery that overlooked the beautiful river; where the land shows so clearly the contrast of death to life; knowing that he was passing away; to face it boldly and bravely: to give so much of his life in making to himself a monument, which was at once a proof of his belief in the immortality of the soul, and in the importance of this life as bearing on that of the future, and was at the same time meant, as he himself says again and again in different inscriptions, to tell future generations the history of the past. Think of the man with some sympathy, the man with a great idea, who was not afraid of facing the unseen, as so many of us are. Then think of the visitors in later times, the old Egyptians, who

came to these tombs and wrote on the walls in beautiful characters, in the few spare inches between the pictures or the sculptures, their impressions of what they saw. Two scribes, who went to a tomb at Benee Hassan, wrote that the interior was "like the sky when the sun rises" (Maspero, *Peintures des Tombeaux Égyptiens, Bibl. de l'Ecole des hautes études*; Sc. ph. hist. xxxv. 49); so did the glowing pictures, which have only lately been destroyed, strike the Egyptians in their fancy! And then think of the Greek and the Roman, who left for us in neat *graffiti* their interesting impressions of the scene. There is a very curious story of the visit to an Egyptian tomb by one of the Coptic saints, which has been taken out of a Coptic manuscript by Mr. Revillout of the Louvre, one of the leading men of our day in the interpretation of the phases of Egyptian life and history. This statement tells the story of the gentle Egyptian saint, who, fleeing away from the Persian invasion in the seventh century of our era, the first sign of the storm of the great Mohammedan conquest, took refuge in a tomb at Thebes; and his deacon, who tells the story, relates how, going into the tomb, they found it spacious and adorned, containing the mummy of a rich man, enwrapped in magnificent swathings. On the walls

were a number of tablets. He found a roll, and gave it to his master, who unrolled it, and read the names of those here buried ; and then he gave him a charge to return to the convent, and bring him his provisions once a week. One day when he was returning he heard within the tomb one weeping and beseeching the aid of the saint. And then he recounts how he heard his master talking to the old Egyptian who was buried there. The Egyptian was complaining of the misery of the future state in the place of punishment into which he had been cast, but he said the saint's prayers had at last given him respite. The saint had examined him, and found he knew nothing of Christianity, so he dismissed him to rest. "Sleep till the day of the general resurrection." Then the narrator, the deacon, enters the tomb, and says he found no one within but his master ; but there was the mummy, sleeping in his place as before (Revillout, *Revue Égyptologique*, 1881, 67 *seqq.*) Then we must think of the Arab visitor in the early days, who paid great respect to these tombs. There is a very strong appeal by the great physician and philosopher Abd-el-Lateef, of Bagdad, for the protection of ancient buildings. He lived in the time when the sceptre had passed away from the Arabs, and fallen into the hands of the Kurdish house of

Saladin. He says the former kings commanded that these monuments should be spared, though they were not of the religion of those who raised them. The reasons given by this great Aristotelian philosopher are worthy of being heard now. He says these monuments are records of time; then they narrate the events of history, and so confirm the truth of the sacred Book. Then he adds : " They give us a warning whence we come and whither we go ; " and last of all, they offer us a picture of the manners and customs of ancient times, and of their art and philosophy. Therefore, he says, such monuments should be preserved, for what better incentive could you have to study than they afford ? And he laments the destruction wrought by greedy seekers after treasure, who recklessly destroyed the ancient works of art (*Hist. Aeg. Compend.* i. 4). After this came the great building kings, who raised those splendid edifices in Cairo which have fallen into ruin ; though we trust the Commission which we have aided to call into existence will do something to preserve them. The remains of Memphis were destroyed by these building kings, and where Abd-el-Lateef saw them there is now little but the fallen Colossus to mark the site.

The last of the builders was the utilitarian Turk,

and he turned the sepulchres of Egypt into mere quarries, and excavated the tombs for stone. He was followed by the European traveller. Before he came there were, in my recollection, thirty-three years ago, tombs as perfect as when they were made. But then came the traveller, this reckless man, with what is called high education and culture, perhaps an Oxford or Cambridge scholar, who would not be guilty of fraud, deceit, or lying, but who deliberately destroyed history. M. Naville, the greatest interpreter of Egyptian philosophy of our day, was a long time at Thebes, copying inscriptions in the royal tombs, in order to publish the Litany of Ra, the great document of Egyptian pantheism. What is the history of that task? Here and there there is a gap, which is caused by the ignorant traveller who has cut portions out of a record without knowing what it means. He did not intend to put them in a museum. Museums are for entire monuments, and not for such things as these, which are worse than stolen goods. Mariette immortalises a traveller who broke into the temple of Deyr-el-Bahree at Thebes, and cut out the figure of an Ethiopian princess, the earliest and most curious that time has preserved to us, of the sixteenth century before our era. He cut out only one figure from a long

series ; hacked it out to carry it away for his own pleasure, or, still worse, to offer it for sale. Such things seem to us incredible, and yet I have seen them done. They were done last year by educated Englishmen and Americans, for very rarely are Frenchmen or Germans guilty. That is another reason why we should try to stop such evil doings ; this is something all of us can do, with this Society or without it. Time would fail me were I to preach on this melancholy text. I must go on to my subject.

First of all, I will endeavour to give you the Egyptian doctrine of the soul. It is quite impossible here to draw an outline of the Egyptian religion, but I can offer you something as a key to the knowledge of it which is very important. Some religions have had a regular development, others have been arrested in their development by many causes. In the Egyptian you can trace distinctly that there was, at a very early period, an arrest between two ideas of spiritual things ; and, consequently, two ideas have ruled to the last. Within these limits there was great development, but it was always controlled by the conditions which obliged the Egyptians to keep the old and the new, the barbarous and the civilised, together. You are all familiar with the theory of the solar myth in the Greek mythology ; it is first

the history of the daily or yearly course of the sun ; next, it is the story of the life of man, his rise, his great glory in his meridian, his fall, his apparent defeat, and his final triumph ; then it becomes a legend or story of a particular individual, perishing like Achilles in the shadowy gate of Troy, in the fulness of his power. In Egypt it never goes beyond the second stage. It is first the practical view of the course of the sun, then the allegorical view of the human life ; but it never passes into the story of a particular life. We must remember this religion had great qualities, although there are those things in it which must always rightly remain barbarous to us, such as animal worship. There are noble conceptions ; there is the conception of the unity of God, so undoubtedly true of the Egyptians, that they sought in three different ways to work it out and prove it ; so true that one of their philosophers writes, 3000 years before our era, as a modern philosopher would write, of God, and not of the gods ; so true, that the name of God never became the name of different gods, and, when the Copts threw away all ideas of their old religion, in their version of the Scriptures they retained the word "God" as the true, holy word, which had never lost its force throughout the ages.

Now as to the doctrine of the soul. With a nation like the Egyptians the leading principle of their religion is the relation of the soul to human life and responsibility. M. Maspero, in his *Histoire Ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient* (3d ed. 39 *seqq.*), an admirable little book, has given a picture of the Egyptian doctrine of the soul, which I have hitherto thoroughly accepted, and quoted and used; but I now think he has gone a little beyond the ancient documents. A very beautiful account of this doctrine is found in one of the books written about the third century of our era. This is the *Poemander* of Hermes Trismegistus, an interesting dialogue, which evidently embodies in the Platonic form the Egyptian belief. M. Maspero has taken this, and has put in the earlier equivalents wherever they were necessary. I do not say he is wrong, but I cannot go quite as far as he does, because I think the Greek philosophers may have gone a little beyond the authority they possessed to give a grammatical and logical form to the old ideas.¹

The Egyptian soul is represented to us by the monuments as consisting of three different essences. There are three names which apply to the different elements which constitute the immaterial part of

¹ See Mr. S. G. Owen's *Chancellor's Latin Essay*, 1882, p. 41.

man. These names I will not give you in ancient terms, but in their modern equivalents. There is first the genius or "double." That was the old notion of the inhabitant of the tomb, the notion of the ghost, the exact representation of the person as he was when living, and one who required the protection of the tomb, where he should be housed and fed and even entertained. That creature, the double, lived like the doppelgänger of German ghost-lore, during the lifetime of the man, and, in the olden time, represented him after death.

Then there was also the soul, which, with the Egyptians, was common to man and the animals, the animal soul. We may call it the life, but it was always distinguished as the soul. It was animated by the Divine intelligence, which was the highest part of man, which did not come from man but from God. This was the immortal part of humanity. So that first there was the double or genius, then the soul, and lastly the intelligence. The conscience was distinguished from all these, and was proper to the soul, and, according to the Egyptians, the seat of the conscience was the heart. We gather this from the different religious books which have been found buried with the mummy for his safe passage through the mysteries of the unknown world to final

happiness. The doctrine of the future of the soul was more important to the Egyptians than that of its present, and the whole doctrine is consistently represented in the story of the god Osiris, who is the sun of the night and in a lesser degree the sun of the day.

He is imagined as rising in his brightness, but suddenly he disappears beneath the western horizon, conquered by darkness. Subsequently he rises again as a young sun and asserts his victory over darkness and evil. As Osiris every man and woman went into the land of shades to be judged by him, and as he passed to judgment he had great trials and great dangers to undergo, but the greatest trial of all was the final judgment in the Hall of the Double Truth, or if you like, Truth and Justice. The soul went without its intelligence to judgment, but the conscience remained, and the soul prayed it not to bear witness against it in its trial. The trial over, the soul passed away, if condemned, to the second death. For to the Egyptians there was no hope after condemnation.¹ After the judgment the soul had,

¹ It may be thought that the Church is indebted to Egypt for the dogma of eternal condemnation, which many refuse to see in either the Old or the New Testament. And we must remember that Origen, an Egyptian, a Platonist, and a Christian, worthy to be called a Father and even a Doctor of the Church, was the first to protest against the doctrine, which was not, he judged, Semitic, and against which he appealed to the authority of the Bible.

though justified or triumphant, to go through further ordeals, to cultivate the Elysian Fields, and to pass at length into blessedness. The intelligence returned into the soul, which was received by the Creator, and did not again resume its sad and perilous life upon the earth. Every trial was passed and full joy was obtained. It was absorbed in the Divine Essence.

All this happened in that mysterious country, the Amenti or hidden land, which means in Egyptian, like the Hebrew Sheol, both the tomb and also the underworld; so that in Hebrew as in Egyptian you have the double use of the same term. But when the Egyptian prays in his sepulchral tablets for the future, and calls for the prayers of those who visit his tomb, he speaks of the hidden land as the ancient, the vast, the perfect; and this must certainly apply to the "other world," an Egyptian term, and not to the tomb. Other expressions lead to the belief that, in most cases, we are not dealing with material but spiritual conceptions. Yet it is hard to connect the mummification of the dead with the future state. I believe the mummy was originally due to the preserving quality of the sand of the desert and the piety of the relations, but, of course, in process of time became attached to the ideas of immortality.

The Egyptians were conscious of a great difficulty in the association of apparently preternatural preservation on earth with their notions of the importance of the future state. Hence the last ceremony, that sacred ceremony which was performed before the mummy was inclosed in the sepulchral chamber and the pit was filled up that none should ever enter again, was the family and sacerdotal rite, in which a priest and the eldest son conferred on the mummy the power of movement. They wanted to make it clear that they were not burying the man himself but only the outer covering in which his soul and intelligence had moved and lived. If you look for a moment at a picture of the funeral ceremony you will see how this doctrine is illustrated. It represents the funeral of a great Theban noble (Wilkinson, *Ancient Egyptians*, 1st ed., pl. 83).

Here we see both the mummy borne along as the creature to be buried, and the furniture of the tomb for the double as its inhabitant; but most strangely, in the lowest line you see the dead husband and his living wife who lamented him (the Egyptians were much attached, the husband and wife), twice passing across the sacred river, he himself as the mummy and as the living double, with his wife a living person, going to the other side of the river at Thebes to his

burial-place, and, as the language of the inscription tells us, also going many miles away to Abydos, where there was a gap in the mountain through which the souls of men flew into the underworld in the wake of the setting sun. They knew exactly what this was and where it happened. The intelligence is not here; it is much too sacred to be mixed up with funeral rites (See Maspero, *Études Égyptiennes*, t. i, fasc. 2).

Now, to show the construction of the tomb, which was so great a matter to the Egyptians, I have given in a diagram a very good section from a paper by Mariette (Perrot, *Histoire de l'Art dans l'Antiquité: l'Égypte*, p. 186). In this there are three portions of the tomb; first the chapel, always open to visitors, then the pit leading down, in this case from the floor of the chapel, but in other tombs from the summit of the tomb through the rock, to the sepulchral chamber, which was beneath the chapel. Besides these three parts, some of the most ancient tombs contain a fourth, that which has been called the secret chamber, closed up, and only connected with the chapel by air-holes, and containing several statues of the deceased, which are placed there so that the double might enjoy the fragrance of the sacrifices and incense offered in the chapel to his

memory. Two other diagrams represent two of the oldest tombs ; those which face north have a portico (*Id.*, p. 176), and those which look westward have a recessed entrance, and usually a false door besides (Cf. *Id.*, 173). By a glance at the drawings of the Great Pyramid, which is typical of the whole group of Memphite Pyramids, you will see that the principles are the same as those of the lesser tombs. In the elevation you will see that in front of the pyramid there was a chapel (Cf. *Id.*, plan, p. 198); the sloping passage shown in the section (*Id.*, p. 212) was the pit which led to the sepulchral chamber. There was no other object in building a pyramid than to make the memory of the king lasting, and to raise a fitting representation of the immortality of the soul. We have not wasted our time in considering Professor Smyth's speculations, which have been all destroyed by recent measurements, and have all to be speculated over again. I should also notice that I have in another diagram a representation of the sepulchral chapel of the largest sort, one of the great temples in Western Thebes, which will show how all these things are kindred and illustrative of one another.

Now as to the contents of these different chambers and their decoration. The chapel was the centre of all family worship. The Egyptian temple was even

more restricted in its use than the Greek or Roman. The king, as high-priest, or his representative, officiated there for all the people. Religion was confined to the chapel of the tomb. There the Egyptian family met, and made their offerings; and that is one of the reasons why we ought to have some respect for these funeral monuments. There is something peculiarly touching in the motive which led the Egyptians to record that which they felt to be most sacred, and that which was most worthy of commemoration as history. Not less touching is the trust placed in the visitor. Mariette says that among hundreds of tombs he found only a very few with evidence of a door. The ancient tombs were considered perfectly free from any danger at the hands of the spoiler. So civilised were the Egyptians that it was not thought necessary to guard their sepulchres. It was left to the higher civilisation of modern times to despoil them: it needed people of culture to do that; and it can never be undone. This is what makes our regret the more bitter.

The purpose of the chapel was threefold. This is told in the inscription over the door, and more fully in the sepulchral tablet, which always faces the east, and is in the west wall, being the entrance to the underworld, the hidden land being in the west.

From it we learn that every one who should visit the tomb should say a prayer for the good funeral of the deceased, that he should have a happy passage through the risks of the other world, and that offerings should be made on stated days. These rites and duties had a wise end in connecting the future offerings with the funeral chapel, because the mummy so became a sort of title-deed of the estate. So long as he was safe there was a centre for the worship of the gods, and so long as the priests received their share of the offerings, which in the case of one of the pyramid-building kings took place for some 3000 years, it was their interest to keep the estates in the family. One estate was taxed for so much honey, another for so much milk, and so on. That is how the mummy became so very important a personage, and how mummification was brought to very great perfection, because it was necessary that people should be quite sure that there should be something real in the tomb for which these offerings should be duly paid; and that, in fact, the mummy should not disappear but remain as the man himself, or at least his human envelope. In these chapels many scenes are represented with great freedom and fulness, especially those relating to the occupations of the deceased in his lifetime, and there are not

only religious but historical pictures. In the earliest tombs we find abundant subjects portraying the life, the ordinary employments, and the great funeral rites. All our ideas of Egyptian manners and customs down to a late period come from the pictures of the tombs. They were there within my memory, but have now for the most part perished. The greatest scene of all is the funeral feast, when the relations celebrate the passage of the deceased to the other world, with the desire that he should enjoy a perfect day at the last, and they meet together with dancing and music, and then they raise that strange dirge over him, which is the most wonderful mixture of true lament and the intense desire still to enjoy life as well as they can.

Then the sepulchral chamber was also a place as if for the living. Unfortunately all the tombs which have been opened, with one exception, have been rifled; consequently we cannot speak with certainty of their furniture. The sepulchral chamber being below the ground has very little of decoration; but in the oldest ages we know that the sole decoration of the upper chamber related to this life, while that of the sepulchral chamber related to the future state; for since in these latest times pyramids of the ancient period have been opened, it has been proved

that the whole decoration of the sepulchral chamber should refer to the future of the soul, the inscriptions conveying the hope and the certainty that the king would pass into the celestial abodes, and repose at last with the sun in his final resting-place. The furniture of the chapel was probably very limited, because the chapel was always open ; and I do not think even the Egyptians would have placed costly vessels of gold and silver and brass where some passer-by, perchance not imbued with the general piety of the race, might carry them off. The sepulchral chamber no doubt held the vessels, the chair, couch, and so forth, carried in the funeral procession and placed in the crypt for the use of the deceased, or to speak more correctly, the double. Such objects were actually found in an unrifled tomb. In process of time the two ideas, the idea of the soul passing away into the other world and the double still living in the tomb, became antagonistic ; and as we reach later days we find that the notion of enlivening the chapel with joyous pictures disappeared, and the subjects of the Book of the Dead took its place ; and at last the chapel itself disappeared, and the whole labour was expended on the sepulchral chamber and in the most costly stone coffins for the dead. So in spite of the fixed canon of the Egyptian religion,

within the limits it allowed there was a certain development.

Here I would draw your attention to the fact that art in Egypt, first in the tomb, and then elsewhere, is the expression of the noble ideas which the Egyptian carried with him to the decoration of his sepulchre. Of course it may be said that the forms of Egyptian art are those most suited to permanence. That I quite admit; but the forms most suited to permanence are suggestive of permanence. The pyramids are permanent; but they undoubtedly suggest permanence. They stand there on their pedestal of rock and defy the efforts of successive quarrymen to destroy them. Not only in the pyramids, but in the other forms, I think you see the development of the same idea. Remember the enormous size of the columns of some of the temples, and the great size of the stones of which the structures are built. Remember too that by a trick of perspective the Egyptians increased to the eye of the visitor the dimensions of the temples, by making each great court or hall rather smaller than that before it, a practice to which I recall but one exception. As you visit these monuments it strikes you forcibly that they portray that which was most in the Egyptian's heart, his belief in immortality.

He has succeeded in embodying for himself on earth its best material representation.

The colour, I think, no less than the form, is true to the same doctrine. Egyptian colour must be seen in the Egyptian sunlight, which almost blots it out, or in the dim interior of an Egyptian temple, and then the strong contrasts of bright hues are very much sweeter and more musical than they seem to us. There is a gentle harmony in them. J. F. Lewis, the greatest recent painter of light after Turner, remarked to me in Egypt that the sun made the light cold and the shadows warm. It is impossible, without seeing a very fine Egyptian monument under the conditions of light in which the builders meant it to be seen, for us to apprehend their colouring, which, certainly, when represented in pictures or seen in our own generally diffused light, has an aspect of harshness, though the harmony of colour is maintained in the use the Egyptians make of it. Of course I do not go into the more intricate question of the use of the compound colours in place of the simple ones, for this innovation is of the Græco-Egyptian age; nor do I think we can judge the old colouring unless we can see it in its original form. Take ivory and ebony, gold, lapis lazuli, green and red jasper, and let a great master make a mosaic in

Egyptian style, and you would see how really grand it is, and how it has in it that large simplicity which connects it with the expression of durability. I think if you will study Egyptian decoration you will find this to be true.

Now I must pass to our Society, but in leaving Egypt I would entreat you to do all you can to study the remains of these precious monuments, and honour that long antiquity and religion which the Egyptians have bequeathed to us. It is a science at once the most instructive and entertaining. You cannot do better than read M. Revillout's essays in the *Revue Égyptologique*, essays of profound learning, all full of the most delightful touches of humour, and written with the keen insight of a Frenchman and with the thorough knowledge of a scholar. So do not desert the old subject while you cultivate new ones; but keep a corner of your hearts for the study of that which is the oldest, and one of the most sacred of human records, the Egyptian.

Now a word about the Society. You are here to help the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, which did me the honour to call me in with reference to the Arab monuments, and which has impressed me as being not only in earnest, but as being composed of hard-working and hard-worked men,

not rich men, but men who give their time for a great principle. It is a Society which has worked through good and evil report. It fights with infallibility. It wishes to call the attention of people all over England to the value of that which they are about to hand over to an irresponsible authority. I remember last year going to a church in Cornwall. I remarked upon its beauty, but thought that it looked suspiciously new. A friend said, "Yes, that church has a curious history. It was one of the very few Early English churches in England that had Norman transepts. It was restored, and the work of the Norman transepts put into the chancel as their appropriate place." That is the way the sculptures of antiquity have been treated, and it is only the statues dug out of the earth, or raised aloft above it, that are yet as when they were made, changed only by the chances of time; like the priceless marbles of the Mausoleum and the Parthenon. My feeling, as Keeper of Coins in the National Museum, is very strong against restoration, because I have suffered long and tedious labour, and have had to draw upon the national purse for thousands of pounds, to replace the Roman coins which had been touched up and restored, and consequently had lost all their historical value. I have been told that this Society is a radical society, but on looking over the members of

the Council I find it is very much like two distinguished assemblies which meet in another place, and consist of many political sections. But in our policy we are intensely conservative. However different our views, we are all agreed upon one principle, and that is, that what must be done upon all occasions when "restoration" is proposed, is to excite the attention of those who are responsible, first, local authorities, and then the nation at large, so that our noble and ancient monuments should not be ruined. They exist for the benefit of the nation, and it is our duty to wake public interest in the matter, and to do our utmost to save for future instruction those treasures which, like the Egyptian tombs, we may live to lament in vain. I would give three short reasons for sympathising with and supporting us. I would appeal to your historical sense to save the monuments of history, to your religious sense to save the temples of your fathers, and to your personal feelings. Here is one who has wrought for us in the field of art, hard and unceasing work, and who, more than any other living man, has brought this great duty home to our hearts. If we owe him gratitude for having delighted the hearing ear as much as the seeing eye, if we feel that our homes have been made by him more restful to the weary head, more

educating to the young intelligence ; if we feel all this, and that as we look around us we may say of him while he is yet in his meridian, that which was said of Sir Christopher Wren when he had passed away—"If you ask for his monument, look around !" then, as he has done these things for us, let us in gratitude care for the Society which William Morris has most at heart.

[This Lecture has been printed from a shorthand report, as spoken, with as little alteration as possible.—R. S. P.]

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LECTURE II.

BY PROFESSOR W. B. RICHMOND.

MONUMENTAL PAINTING.

To deal satisfactorily with such a vast subject as "Monumental Painting," or to follow it into the different fields of art to which the subject leads, would be more than could be expected from a single Lecture ; for the many classes of painting that may be, in the most comprehensive sense, called monumental, cover the whole area of the history of art. They embrace epic and history painting, portrait and landscape.

Monumental painting is not of necessity *immediately* connected with architecture and sculpture, as decorative painting is. Nor is it necessary that, to be monumental in character, a painting should be executed upon a wall ; for there are many works easily cited which, while they bear a distinctly monumental character and treatment, are painted upon both canvas and panel. Thus it is not at all

with this largest and most comprehensive view that we shall occupy ourselves to-day. The subject would be too large and too varied, but the remarks in this Lecture will be confined to a general review of the progress of painting from Giotto to Michael Angelo; and as, during this period of time, almost all the most important works in painting were executed on walls, monumental painting in the sense of mural painting will alone be considered, and we will consider alone that side of the art which is most generally accepted as "monumental."

Further, it is my object to show the importance upon *art generally* of the influence of architecture upon both painting and sculpture. And how painting grew under the wing of architecture and sculpture, and how greatly she profited by contact with them.

Before Mr. Ruskin had opened the eyes of us all, or most of us, to the beauties of the early Italian Art, —whether the conventionalities of the Bolognese Schools in academic lines, the affectations of Correggio in sentiment, or the pedantic brown trees of the landscape painters, stood for truth—these traditions entirely governed taste; while the real expressive quality of early art was forgotten or passed unnoticed. And whatever difference of opinion there may be about Mr. Ruskin's art teaching on some matters, it

must be acknowledged that he has chastened the taste of England, that he has greatly added to whatever there might be of observation or love of natural beauty in us, besides withdrawing all sympathy from pretentious, inexpressive, or blatant art. Let me remind you that there is no reason now whatever for any of us to remain ignorant concerning Italian art; we can all possess excellent reproductions of what is best; nor need we remain insular in our taste, nor always harp upon that monotonous string of national art; but rather should we endeavour to enlarge our sympathies and spread our ground, learning all we can from the other side of the silver streak, and especially should we study the severer work of early art. For we have much to learn. Our English school began, we may say, with Hogarth; since Gothic times, we have had no archaic art, we have no painting in connection with architecture, and our sculpture, such as there has been, invariably was heedless of its relationship to architecture. Nearly all the religious painting, and the tempera pictures or frescoes which existed in our churches or public buildings, were destroyed at or after the Reformation; so here English painting received a check in decorative art from which she has not yet recovered. So in painting, England has no archaic traditions, and the art

special to her has been of a far more Dutch than Italian character. It cannot be doubted that hitherto we have suffered by the want of the severe training special to the mural painter; and our art would be greatly enlarged, and would become even more comprehensive than it is, were the education of our young artists carried on with the severe example of the earlier Italian painters in view.

While advocating study of the art of Italy, it is not at all with a view that English art should become like Italian art that I speak, but that such an education would be best to develop the best execution, the soundest and most direct methods, and the choice of the most interesting subjects for representation.

In Italy, both fresco and tempera painting were the means of decoration when mosaic ceased. When the architect admitted more light into his buildings the dull surface of fresco took the place of the glorious glitter of mosaic. Fresco leads of necessity to a noble style of work; it cannot be done hurriedly; nothing can be achieved by accident; design, in all its branches of form, light and shade, and colour, must be planned and ready before the fresco painter can begin his work upon the wall. And much, very much, of the dignified restraint of early Italian art is due, not only to the conjunction of the three

arts, and their mutual help, but to the precise and methodical nature of the art-training which the process of fresco painting demands.

This, then, it appears to me, is a lesson of no small importance, and one to be followed. For whether the modern painter is or is not to be a mural painter, an education formed upon the severest practical lines will assist rather than retard his progress, whatever branch of the art he may choose to follow.

Perhaps it is no use to hope that fresco painting, if only as an education, will ever be taught in our schools ; but it is distinctly a pity that it should not, on account of the chastening severe influence it has had upon art, as I have indicated. Still with all the aids there are, or are not, we must not expect to progress too quickly. Our hope lies in the fact that the section of the educated public is becoming larger, and the study of a severer form of art is more universal than it was.

The dread of Idolatry, the terror of Romanism, and the cold hand of Puritanism, chilled the warm stream of art ; and a cold one-day-a-week respectability has warned the country of the seductive power of beauty.

Hence for the most part our churches are caves

or white-washed sepulchres, uncoloured, or if coloured at all, only in parts, patchily, and with little general idea of design; and such designs as have been attempted are formed, for the most part, after mechanical patterns and mechanical colours, under the uniform glitter of tile glazes. And indeed, as yet, there appears but little hope that the demand for real decoration will arise, or the necessity for it in our churches or public buildings will become a part of public feeling. But, however this may be, it is the plain duty of those who have voices to be heard, and who are earnestly desiring the progress of the highest forms of art, at every opportunity they may have of appealing to the public to do so frankly, and in every way to open the eyes of the people to a great want, and if possible to excite them to action. Yet while so large a section of exhibition-goers is satisfied with the dreary commonplace platitudes upon morbid or sentimental daily life; is satisfied with art that tells of the unfortunate girl, the hungry baby, the affectionate grandmother, the funeral of the first-born, Sunday morning in the village, and such-like, for pictures, any future for true art in connection with the deeper thoughts and aspirations of man appears still far off. Now let me remind you of a truism. The works of the great masters, *and these*

the severest and least florid—whether of architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, or music,—should be the groundwork of education; the more austere form of each art should guide the earliest steps of the progress of taste. I say the austere and severest arts, because these are always sincere, always untrammelled by affectation, pedantry, or self-consciousness. They are invariably marked by modesty, spontaneity, and directness. The very stammering or halting power of expression so easily discovered in them is full of charm. In fact, in all the arts, the *progress* towards perfection is even more interesting and instructive than the moment of culmination; and certainly, when expression becomes too easy, when language—whether of words, or of the pencil, or of the chisel—becomes facile, the tendency is to trust to such facility, and allow clumsy or undigested thoughts to be decked in ornamental declamations of rhetorical expressions. So the longer the mind dwells upon the earliest works, those works that after all contain the most valuable *motives*,—which may be developed and enriched by greater exactness, precision, or science of expression,—the more alive will it become to their real, strong beauty of thought and concentrated power of expression, and the more wary will judgment be of trusting to florid accom-

plishment and the egoism of talented facility. So it remains that, in order to comprehend the fullest development of the art, we must follow her step by step from her childhood, and being trained by the severest mood of her beauty, we shall be disinclined for extravagant exhibitions of merely a voluminous and artificial expression, and shall turn (having tasted the simplest food) from all that may be over-flavoured or rank. And now we shall try and see how severest monumental painting grew, and under what conditions it flourished, and how the union between the three arts has produced all that is monumental in painting in Italy. In the first place, the architect, the sculptor, and painter of Italy did not hold separate functions. All the three arts were in many, indeed in most, instances combined in one man. Giotto, Brunelleschi, Andrea Verrocchio, Mantegna, Raphael, Lionardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo, are names that recall masters in each separate sphere of the formative arts; if *all* of these did not practise architecture, sculpture, and painting, they were at least conversant with them, and were complete masters of their principles. That complete union of the trio which existed from the earliest times between architecture, sculpture, and painting, each having achieved the power of expression sufficient for a separate

existence,—led indeed to the maturity of the noblest characteristics by the habit of mutual constraint ; and *the three*, wherever or whenever they have remained hand-in-hand in unison of motive, and in acceptance of this, have brought out strongly and defined clearly the limits, natural or philosophical, of one another. The just limit, over which there must be no passing for each art on to the confines of another art, was, in the purest times of art, perfectly understood and recognised.

Architecture enriched her lines with sculpture, her spaces with painting. At the same time, both painting and sculpture were guided and constrained by the severity of contact with the austere lines, geometrical shapes, mathematical proportions, science of structure, and, above all, the conditions of lighting imposed upon both by architecture. While it is the function of sculpture to enliven and enrich, both with subject and ornament, the baldness of many architectural forms, it must be remembered of course that no structure should be weakened thereby, nor must simple masses of unadorned spaces, where these are designedly so, be encroached upon or broken up. The builder has taught the sculptor symmetry, proportion, construction, and restraint, and, as he became riotous and unregardful of simplicity, the sculptor followed him.

Italian sculpture and painting of the twelfth century, and on to the seventeenth, were all in unison, whether for right or wrong. The three arts lived together in constant contact, and there has been no time, whilst they remained acting in conjunction, that a common influence failed them. The Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Gothic arts of architecture, sculpture, and painting, were in perfect harmony, and in all time where laxity crept into one, it crept into all,—so strong is the natural union of the three.

As sculpture has been checked by architecture, so painting has been restrained by architecture ; where the one has been simplest and severest, the other has been simplest in design, but often most splendid in colour ; her own peculiarity, her veriest function, that of colour, has been brought into full power by the severest forms of architecture. Think of the mere shell of St. Mark's at Venice ; what can be simpler of construction ? yet every space is so inviting in form, so suggestive for decoration, that it seems constructed for that purpose. The windows are few, the proportions are grandly simple, and suggest the employment of the brilliancy of gold, its glitter and reflecting qualities. Rich marbles are carved with unending invention and beauty of the severest kind. The designs of the Greek mosaics are masterpieces of

decoration, and for colour these are as perfect as it is possible to imagine. It was, as we all know, through St. Mark's that the revival of the arts of Italy came about ; and if we would understand the principles of design that governed the art of Giotto, we must study the Greek mosaics in Venice, in Rome, and in Ravenna. A few remarks on the unity of the arts may help the subject we have in hand, and let us glance at the specialities of each art.

With all the individuality of the function of painting, both as regards her power over form and colour, the same laws of fitness, constraint, and community with the other arts, should control her ; and they did do so in the times when monumental art was really alive, and was exercising its influence upon all the work of the time, the easel pictures, and the portraits, as well as the mural paintings. In all the three there was then a conjugal vitality.

Then the true faculties of each of the three sisters had been discovered, and their separate spirits were clearly defined ; one supplied that which the other lacked, yet generously yielded to special individualities and superiorities of special functions. And so the three grew on together in mutual interest, assimilating qualities from each other without robbery or encroachment, aware that perfect unity must be

accompanied by constraint and respect. These graceful arts demanded no single rewards or individual praise; but they were content that perfect beauty was found in their combination, and that the true life of art must find in them one common pulsation. Architecture calls, being conscious of her own limits, for the fanciful, sensitive blow of the chisel to enrich and moderate her severity; sculpture, while she adorns, is awed by and constrained by the naked beauty of architecture; painting, when in contact with both sculpture and architecture, catches their chastity of form, their reserve, their regulated quantities, while her full tones of colour give life to the bare surfaces that are permitted to her.

Yet this special gift of painting—her colours, is not recklessly sown broadcast in the best times of art, but the sensuous excess of it is dominated by the atmosphere of judgment, calculated care, and the studied definitions of the two severer arts. What, then, is the monumental painting we are considering? In the strictest sense it is painting connected with architecture and sculpture, and it was through such connection that the art of the painter caught much of the *severer qualities* of those others. The noblest painting is architectonic in the simplicity and clearness of the arrangements of lines, and the preservation

of masses, whether of form or colour, and preserves as much as possible thereby all dignity and nobility of aspect, not frittering by ornament, not emasculating strength and simplicity of line by multitudinous details, nor insisting upon any definite *representation* of nature to the eye, in place of its presentation to the mind. While monumental painting gives to us the forms of the objects she seeks to interest us upon, and the colours of them, she does so only in the simplest and largest manner; indeed, in the childhood of her career, there were scarcely more than emblems of the facts attempted at. "But they were the expressions of the minds of men in the hands of children." Monumental painting is sculpturesque in the placidity and constraint of both action and expression. Trivial human emotions have no part there; the steady march of man's life, the noblest of his feelings, the greatest episodes of his career, the highest hopes of his soul and of its immortality, are the points upon which the painter of eternal truths loves to dwell. Then the mind which sets in forms and colours only such noblest emotions,—the mind that will chiefly give to man the reflection of himself at his best moments, in his greatest likeness to his Creator,—is the most ideal mind and still the most useful; for thus we are reminded of our possi-

bilities, charged with our responsibilities, and being honoured by the highest appreciation of our momentary yearnings in a busy, hurried world, we are calmed by hope, and ennobled by the presentation to ourselves of the real nature within us. It is, as I believe, considered a somewhat sentimental fallacy that man may be called to a sense of his true dignity as a creature of the highest poetic or intellectual capacity by any work of art. As an ethical factor, art is rather supposed to be of no importance, nor to possess aught for man's service, but some passing and sensuous pleasure. And if this be so, it must be admitted that many, nay, most of the greatest works of the world of art have been executed in vain; that the great human poem of the Sistine Chapel is a vacuum; and that Giotto, Fra Angelico, Botticelli, and most of the painters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, lost their time following a vain shadow, and indulging only in empty fancies. Perhaps it is still worth while to cling to the old-fashioned idea that the best artist is he who expresses the greatest number of beautiful thoughts, who lifts us out of our common drudging life into his own world of beautiful ideas, and into the fields of his fancy and inner quiet life, and be thankful to him for opening the gates of a paradise, even for a moment, that we may see, though

but mistily, through the clouds of critical antagonism, some revelation of poetic and truly human suggestions. That character of the painter's art which dwells alone upon the noblest mental attributes, will also deal largely and comprehensively with all physical detail. And though nothing that has to be presented at all will appear too small to be well presented, the painter who grasps and accentuates the salient points of moral character, depicting these with the constraint and style we have been thinking of, will carry into all the details of his work the same manly and sound execution, the same judgment and due relation. And this largeness of aspect existed in the great monumental works of the Italians, not only in their ideas and treatment of form, but also in their treatment of colour; at a glance we perceive the whole unity of their workmanship, the same delicacy of perfection, the same calm reflection in the thought first, the form second, the colour third, and the careful and harmonious execution of the whole in combination.

It is my wish to impress upon you that the qualities of the noblest painting—those dealing with the highest subjects in the highest manner—did come by the union of the three arts; and if I have made myself clear, you will see that the greatest painting

is that which has most of the influence of architecture and of sculpture, but yet has not been robbed of the essential elements belonging to it alone; that painting has been content to be restrained where licence might have entered without loss of individual freedom, acknowledging constraint, and hailing the vigorous help of the more solid and less emotional arts. What is it that holds and charms all who are capable in the frescoes by Giotto at Padua? Is it that we are brought face to face with what is called natural truth in them? are they the looking-glass to the common outside facts of faces, of drapery, of animals, of landscape? are we surprised by the very similitude of all that is embodied to their prototypes? Not at all! There is a spirit here, dwelling far deep down below the surface of the work; there is not only the perfection of story-telling in the simplest and most direct artistic language, but, moreover, there is the justice and clearness of a child's uneducated philosophy. Would we take away that archaic expression? should we seek to add conscious science where already there is unconscious perception, all the unity of the work with the thought would vanish. And yet this purest art was until quite lately here in England almost held up to ridicule; and even in the latter part of the last century, when certainly

Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, and *Turner* later, were doing great work in another direction, early Italian art was looked upon as dry or insipid.

Giotto's art was the outcome of Greek tradition grafted upon an Italian spirit; he is at the end of an almost unbroken tradition. The mosaicist who made the figure of the Virgin in the church at Torcello—that mighty mother of awe-inspiring dignity and beauty—might have been the brother of the later painter, as far as the style and dignified artistic means are concerned. The artists of Ravenna, who in the sixth century made the mosaic in St. Vitale, representing Justinian and Theodora, had hold of the more impressive traditions of art—traditions never quite lost sight of, till the end of the sixteenth century and later, through the Greek influence of St. Mark's and its mosaic workers, and these were brought into Umbria through the efforts of Cimabue, and from him transmitted to his pupil Giotto. And this monumental art of Giotto, complete in unity of design and execution—indeed, being a sort of keystone of all the best principles of design—was the foster-mother of the art that followed in Italy; and, moreover, as long as a vestige of its influence remained active, as long as the simple and modest language of Giotto's art prevailed and influenced,

sentiment held science in check, and the constraint of tradition, based upon sound simplicity of thought, prevented the too rapid but at last crushing advance of artistic licence.

As I said in the earlier part of my Lecture, I say again now, with a definite instance before me, that those who would study monumental art, who would become conversant with its limits and the true boundaries of just taste, must feed, before attempting to advance in hurry to the greater luxuries of more extended artistic grounds, upon these earliest expressions of the mind of as great a painter as ever lived, whose shortcomings were only of science, whose work is always clear in invention, absolute in taste, right in feeling, whose colour for its purpose is quite perfect, and, above all, whose serious and noble design no art ever surpassed. But no hasty observer will get out of the work of Giotto what he may. The quaintness will startle, and the subtlety of human expression is too great to strike at a glance; and the gestures and indications of action relating to the event of the design are too really natural and dignified to be immediately or strikingly apparent. It is essentially work that needs study and sympathy to enjoy or profit by; it is so delicately felt, and so childlike in expression, and, withal, it is always

robust in thought. When all the stories expressed by Giotto are made out and understood, when each motive of every figure has been clearly followed, there yet remain many purely physical beauties to be studied and enjoyed—physical beauties that have been but too little recognised. If trouble be taken, hands may be found as perfect in beauty as need be (this I mean in the drawing of them); and as for the invention of their actions, it cannot be better, for no greater designer of simple action ever existed than Giotto. And in the drawing of hair Giotto was again remarkable, and will stand comparison with painters of more studied knowledge, while in the design of it none surpass him. The heads, too, throughout the Padua series—especially of the Virgin—are as varied in emotional beauty as can be imagined. Observe this invention. At the Annunciation the Virgin is calm, expectant, and hopeful. Later, anticipation of trouble ages the beautiful countenance without spoiling it. But we find the sob of agony marring it as Christ is led away to Calvary; and physical strength gives way at the Crucifixion,—passionate humanity of feeling overrides all ideal feeling; and then, most marvellous touch of all for poetic thought, at the Ascension, the drama being complete, the suffering of her

Son over, that early calm of youth—but slightly aged, again is reclaimed, and the face of the Virgin assumes an evidence of satisfied revelation. In all these designs of Giotto there is not one single strain for artistic effect, neither is there any expression not justified, nor gesture unnatural; all is stately without stiffness, simple without monotony, profound in sentiment with no weakness, sensible without commonplaceness; and wherever nude form appears, though it is evidently not understood from any scientific knowledge, it is never ugly, and, though incomplete, it is mostly beautiful. We have mentioned the desirability of the influence of sculpture upon painting; now note this influence upon these works of Giotto. As compositions, apart altogether from the sentiment of them, structurally, each of these designs might well be executed in bas-relief. The planes are few, simply distinguished, without any abrupt or disturbing perspective diminution of any of the figures; there are very few instances of fore-shortening, or of any distortion of limbs, and, even when slight fore-shortening has been adopted, it is not greater than might be admitted into a relief. Great perspective diminution is never to be found in paintings of the purest style. It was not until painting broke loose from its proper or chief function

as an aid to adorn and enrich architecture, that perspective, both of form and atmosphere, became a necessity. The light and shadow in Giotto's work falls directly, without artifice, as in the open air, and is pronounced only strongly enough to give an amount of relief, agreeable and in due relation to the simplest decorative effect. The colour is throughout of extreme beauty, yet little more than unbroken hues of unmixed and pure colour are admitted, shaded by a darkening only of the local tint, and yet we are satisfied. In the flesh painting, only a slight tint of carnation is used, this quite unbroken by shadow, but by delicate gradations and soft modelling becoming quite satisfactory, and sufficiently real for such purpose of art as Giotto went in search of. One of the very marked characteristics of the work of Giotto, and one much to be noticed, is the admirable design of his drapery; without being in the modern sense naturalistic or elaborate, there is not one touch of mannerism of design, not one fold that is drawn by rule of thumb, or without a distinct motive, although a traditional style or arrangement is evident. Indeed, on close examination, there will be found a greater *truth* in the motive of the drapery, as it answers to the gestures of the figures it covers, than in much more elaborate and

studied work of a more cultured period of art. Here, again, the art of Giotto may be compared to Greek art. For just as in Greek bas-relief we find an ordered similarity of style in the folding of drapery, varied sufficiently to give interest and avoid monotony, so in Giotto's drapery there is a definite style, a large and simple folding, relieved by small puckering where such action is necessary to give life, but no lifeless monotony of design is ever present. At no period of art, even in its most *cultivated* moments, can we find work in more perfect concord, or in more complete union with itself, than the work of Giotto contains. There are no more beautiful designs anywhere in Italy; there are no works more subtle in intention, or purer as decorative art, or intellectually stronger than the frescoes at Padua; their shortcomings, that any tyro can see plainly enough, are those only of inexperience in certain technical matters of structural knowledge and exact draughtsmanship. Giotto attained perfection in expression of simple and childlike emotion; beyond this he could not go, and the natural restraint imposed by the time of comparative scientific infancy of art in which he lived was rather of advantage to him than otherwise; as far as it went his work is to us quite satisfactory, because all that

is of reality necessary to fine art is there complete. Later, and only a little later, expression of emotions and attempts at greater mobility of expression became more or less of grimace ; and when action of a momentary character was attempted by inferior painters, it was forced and self-conscious, showing in a very naive way the not unnatural pride of the workman at having achieved something new in art, or having conquered some technical difficulty. Buffalmacco was an instance of this, and even in a minor degree that great Simone Memmi, whose grimness of imagination is Dantesque, but whose artistic sense was less than Giotto's. And it may be said that for some time after the death of Giotto the art of painting progressed very little ; no painters arose who rivalled his invention, and it was long before the art of a single painter showed such completeness, such satisfying balance of all the attributes of art.

As an artist Giotto stands quite alone in his logical completeness. Whilst he seems to end the period of classic art in Italy, he opens the way for realistic art. He is the end and the beginning. His work will stand by the side of the frieze of the Parthenon, and not suffer excepting through hypercriticism ; and yet at the same time it will hold

a dignified ground when side by side with Luca Signorelli or Michael Angelo. Here it may be said that all really great art has kinship ; no true art will materially suffer from juxtaposition. However different the results may be, the general aim of all great art is alike ; it is the search for the noblest, the most characteristic, or the most beautiful, and therein there is an affinity.

Now I must ask you to pass over a period of history slightly with me, that we may arrive at Michael Angelo, and his work as a monumental painter. The art of painting from the time of Giotto to Michael Angelo was *chiefly* employed upon walls, hence an architectural symmetry and a sculpturesque reserve was practised. But, even when the art was not mural, the dignity of decorative art maintained its ascendancy over design generally, and the portraits and pictures were conducted with the same large manner of preception, design, colour, and execution, which had been thus inculcated by contact.

Art having been pretty nearly perfected as to pure sentiment and general decorative effect very early in its career, but remaining feeble and limited concerning science, had to find a road for its advancement in another channel, and, to advance, it had to

extend the field of its observation of nature, and knowledge concerning her laws.

So each painter kept adding something of knowledge,—one of perspective, like Andrea Verrocchio, whose last years were spent almost exclusively in the study of it and of geometry, another of anatomy, and so on; and Benozzo Gozzoli painted landscapes in so delicate and living a manner as had not before been dreamed of,—he delighted in the designing of cities in his pictures, in fanciful arabesque, elaborate mouldings, and reliefs to his architecture; he delighted too in the painting of plants and flowers in his foregrounds, done with great truth and delicacy. But, above all, he was a painter of character,—a portrait painter. Indeed the Campo Santo at Pisa, where Benozzo did his chief work from 1469, may be called a school for portrait painting. Yet, with all the beauty of workmanship, diligent and keen observation, we cannot claim for Benozzo any high place as a man of imagination. Indeed, where that quality is called for in his design, there is little satisfaction given; but of fancy he was full, and a certain dignified silent grace is his. Born before Benozzo in 1402, Masaccio marks a great realistic period of the development of art. It must have been indeed a marvel to the painters in Florence when, at the consecration of the

Brancacci chapel in 1428, the works of Masaccio, which had employed him for some years, were exposed to view. But little of the romantic invention of many other painters, and especially of the greatest inventors, is to be found in his work. Yet in another direction he made a great stride towards realisation of absolute truth and exact knowledge. And yet there is a dignity of arrangement always, an unimpassioned treatment, magnificent workmanship, in his work, and truth in delineation of human character. The interest of his work lies much in the dignity of design and in the full colour of it, but most of all in the variety of marked types of his heads and in their distinct individuality ; these are evidently all portraits of the utmost fidelity, grandly drawn, and painted with astonishing firmness and precision, incisive as to character and personality. To the Brancacci chapel *we* may well go, as Michael Angelo and Raphael went, to study what true realistic painting may be, without loss of dignity. With all the truth, with all the unflinching fidelity of an extraordinarily strong and fine perception, however ugly according to canons of beauty his models were, not one breath of vulgarity, not a line of exaggeration or caricature finds its way into Masaccio's work. In his colour there is a wholeness without monotony,—it

is select, large in style, healthy, and truthful. His heads represent perhaps as monumental a character as any portrait painting has done ; as dignified as Titian, as true as Holbein, they are as full of character but much nobler than those of Velasquez. Not only was this wonderful faculty of perception consummated in him during the short period of his life of twenty-six years, but also in the science of form, got by careful study of the human frame, he achieved a very distinct position of progress in that direction, thereby most markedly helping the science of art towards a still greater knowledge and achievement. Purely as a colourist, Masaccio far distanced his contemporaries, and as a fresco painter he was the first among Italians who added rich transparency to his shades and deep tones by means of strong glazes of colour upon the surfaces of his painting ; in fact, the impression left upon the mind concerning the colour of Masaccio's work is that of fulness, richness, and harmony ; but, in the design, there is less feeling, a more restricted invention, more limited *poetic* capacity than in the works of many painters of less accomplishment who preceded him. But this was not only natural but desirable. It has been, in the history of art, always a privilege that certain painters should be told off by their natural gifts in special practical directions to

excavate the road for some complete genius who is to combine the essence and purity of early and intense thought with structural knowledge, the authors of which had only the strong vision of their subject to express, having been untrammelled by the intricacies of science. Masaccio was distinctly one of these practical pioneers. He added no poetry to art, but he added much of broad natural fact, powerful skill in handiwork, and the science of many difficult problems. No doubt Paolo Uccelli greatly assisted in his active development, being a contemporary and a man of scientific interest. Yet note, while all the more *natural or intimate* faculties of art as they relate to nature were started into action for future generations by the labours of Masaccio, that symmetry of design, and its constraining power over liberty hitherto practised by the earlier schools, was still not only a tradition for him, but showed itself in practice in his mature and more realistic art. For the influence of sculpture upon this epoch of painting Ghiberti was making his mark, and during the short life of Masaccio he was executing the gates of the baptistery of Florence. This great advance upon the previous art of the sculptor, going on at the most impressionable time of the young painter's life, must have decided the lines in which he would study,

and matured both his judgment and taste with great rapidity, also ordering his realistic tendencies. The friendship between Brunelleschi (sculptor and architect) and Masaccio must have greatly aided the latter in his adherence to the severer methods of design, and thus retarded a too rapid advance of one whose natural genius might have led on to excess in obedience to his special instincts. Here we must break off and leave the point of a new era of realistic art, established by Masaccio, and start on later ground. Forty years after the death of Masaccio we find Luca Signorelli beginning a life of eighty-one years, therein finding himself a contemporary of Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Titian. In his art, again, there comes about still further a development, and yet a greater kinship with the past, carrying us nearer, than did Masaccio's work, in sentiment to Giotto, and in science pointing to Michael Angelo. Already Pollaiuolo was studying the structure of the human form upon scientific principles of anatomical research; these were still further developed by Signorelli, who, twelve years younger than Lionardo da Vinci (the special inspirer of the limitless achievements both of Raphael and Michael Angelo), advanced the art by rapid strides of the science of human form to its ultimate and com-

prehensive perfection; of his works at Orvieto, the frescoes in the chapel of Santo Brizio, I have left myself but little time to speak. That it is evident that Michael Angelo studied them deeply, and that they greatly influenced his design, no one who knows them can doubt. And, while the physical knowledge arrives far nearer to the attainments of Michael Angelo than does any of the art preceding him, the poetic and inventive genius of Signorelli was, in relation to the intermediate art from Giotto, equally extended; for in his frescoes at Orvieto (these alone I instance as his most remarkable works), while the evident progress of freedom and action combined with knowledge of the structure of the human body is found, and that charm of invention and feeling of the earliest art is present, there is added a powerful dramatic element of design and an impetuous imagination. The beauty of the art of Piero della Francesca—under whom Luca studied—by its early influence kept in check a daring and original genius which, in the case of Luca, might otherwise have found a vent in unrestrained freedom of expression. As a colourist Masaccio was the superior of Signorelli; as a designer he was his inferior. Fra Angelico—the most spiritual, perhaps, of all the painters of the fifteenth century—had already completed the ceiling of the chapel of St.

Brizio in the Duomo of Orvieto, and had thereon left the mark not only of his deep feeling but of his highest strength and commanding dignity, when Signorelli began his work there—a worthy ideal for Signorelli to work up to, and a calm example to restrain extravagant invention and cool a too impulsive judgment. In 1489, Luca Signorelli began to decorate this chapel of St. Brizio; in this year Michael Angelo was fourteen years old and had gone to live with Lorenzo de' Medici—having already shown very marked evidence of his strong artistic individuality. And here, probably in daily companionship with the most learned and accomplished men of the time,—with Angelo Poliziano, and Pico della Mirandola,—Michael Angelo, during four years of a most important period of his life, gained such mental instruction and guidance of the very nature to develop his philosophic and poetic temperament. That the influence of Signorelli upon Michael Angelo was very considerable, history and evidence tell us; indeed, Michael Angelo borrowed groups and evidently ideas also from Signorelli. The daring of design, originality of conception, and scientific research into the anatomy of the human body is everywhere apparent in the work of Luca, and excited Michael Angelo (similar as he was to

him in impulsive desire towards the advancement of the art) to still greater and more extended achievement than had yet been attained. It has been my endeavour hitherto to sketch the chains of connection between the old art and the new, and to point out some of the more important links which mark some points in the progress of monumental painting. Art, we have seen, in her progress added to herself more and more freedom of expression, greater science, greater knowledge of perspective and anatomy, and far more command over the multitudinous actions of which the human body is capable. And in all these attainments she gained ; but the inner soul of her expressiveness, the mastery over subtle emotions, tender passions, or exalted grief, was, as we have seen in the art of Giotto, already gained, and in the interval between his time and the time we have now entered upon, but little of the purest æsthetics had been added to art. But now comes the climax. Lionardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, and Raphael,—all three distinctly different in genius from one another, yet as individual as it is possible to imagine,—each one, according to his special gifts, aimed at perfection. Of the works of Lionardo, excepting by his drawings—which are scattered in multitude throughout the museums of Europe,—we know comparatively little

as compared with the completed works of both Raphael and Michael Angelo. His name as a painter has a spell about it; it fills us with curiosity, and excites our imagination perhaps beyond that of any other artist. It may be said that no work exists by which we can test him as a mural painter,—by which we can compare him with Michael Angelo or Raphael. His “Last Supper” scarcely exists; probably there are few touches of his pencil remaining on the wall. His great cartoon of the “Battle of the Standard,” which gave to Michael Angelo a spring forward, and showed to him the chances of still greater liberation for his own genius, is destroyed,—portions of it remaining in copies only. What his power over the expression of the human face was we can fully realise in the portrait of the Mona Lisa; as a completed work this is probably the most important of Lionardo in existence. With regard to his great influence, we all know how Raphael was awakened by him from his gentle dreaming, under the influence of Perugino, and how Michael Angelo was, though many years younger, spurred into competition with the veteran Lionardo. The cartoon of Pisa, executed when Michael Angelo was about thirty years old, came upon the world as a miracle; and, indeed, displaced the design of Lionardo by the still greater command of form (therein shown)

from the foremost position, and was accepted as the greatest achievement of modern art. There is a painter to whom I have not alluded, but whose place in the design of my remarks must not be forgotten, for Domenico Ghirlandaio—a thorough painter, of the soundest skill, and of a well ordered talent,—had the instruction of Michael Angelo, who in Santa Maria Novella assisted his master in the frescoes now to be seen on the walls of the choir of that church. This art, so thoroughly learnt by the young Michael Angelo, remained in abeyance as far as he was concerned for many years, and it was not until 1508, he being then thirty-three years old, that the sculptor was called away from his chisel by Julius II. to take up the brush, and, over the vast ceiling of the Sistine chapel, to employ it to the climax of perfection in design and painting. And now, after all the gathering together of knowledge, the accumulation of experiences, and the hard labour of centuries, the perfection of monumental painting is arrived at under the most individual genius in the whole history of art.

It is to be regretted that only at the end of a Lecture such a subject as the Sistine frescoes should be considered; but the excuse for this must be that the object of the remarks to which you have listened

has not been (as will be apparent to all) to do more than tread lightly upon some stepping-stones of art as they make a way over the wide stream of time. And as one who may perhaps claim to have given some care, and many hours of labour, in order to understand not only the artistic scheme of the incomparable work of Michael Angelo as a painter, but also having tried to comprehend every poetic episode of this mighty epic of art, I shrink from the difficulty, and avoid the audacity which would be involved by a hasty glance over so vast and sublime a subject.

In the history of art this work stands alone,—alone in sublimity of conception, alone in limitless invention, alone in the mastery of its execution. As the courage of the handiwork is great, so is the finish exquisite. Inasmuch as the impetuous wealth of poetry—from the most austere grandeur to an archaic beauty—is within the range of this complete art, and is kept in orderly reserve, this work belongs truly to traditions of sound monumental painting. The severity of early art—the severity of Giotto—is not departed from, and the romantic spirit of the Sienese school may be traced while the highest science is there. Beauty of the strongest, strangest, least expected, and yet most gentle character, is to be found. Raphael, with all his grace of grouping in

his Madonnas and children, with all his charm, never, except in his Madonna di S. Sisto, touched the pathetic chord of mothers' love with the same strength or beauty that Michael has in the groups of the ancestors of Christ in the spandrels. We stand in awe before this sublime history of man. We see man in his perfect purity, in his highest physical beauty, inspired to prophecy, as immortals under the spirit of the Divine being, wielding the sword of retributive justice, obedient to the dictates of faith in a Divine power of healing, by faith overcoming physical strength; and from these high themes we are led to the touching simplicity of the life of men and women in their childhood, youth, maturity, and old age. We are in the presence of an art before which the greatest minds have bowed with respect and admiration, and before which criticism should respectfully keep silence except to appreciate.

We look back from the year when this mighty work was completed, into the distant past, and see the great array of workers, each adding something, and, as we arrive at the last of this long line of great souls, we see one the simplest of all, the thoughtful Giotto, he the beginner of the new art which ends with Michael Angelo. The last echo of the voice of Giotto dies away in the vault of the Sistine chapel.

Art has done all she can do; she has gathered from science all she dare do without injury to her youthful instincts; she has accepted as much freedom as she can; every addition to the links of the chain that bound her to the rock of severest tradition, has been made that can be made; and yet, in the full power of her strength, in the full bloom of her mature beauty, she stands on the edge of a fatal abyss. At the birth of completeness the death-knell of monumental art sounded. The influence of the sister arts one upon the other must begin to cease. Sculpture is to assert her independence of architecture; she is to run loose of all constraint and to become for a time at least hopelessly imbecile. Painting is to be picturesque, not monumental; her ordered garments are to go in tatters, her serious demeanour is to be changed for the flush of lawless liberty.

Paolo Veronese and Tintoretto are yet to hold on to the true principles of art by the healthy vigour of their love of nature a little longer. But with the end of these, when the breath left their bodies, all that was truest in art slept.

LECTURE III.

BY EDWARD J. POYNTER, R.A.

SOME REMARKS ON ANCIENT DECORATIVE ART.

A Lecture given at the South Kensington Museum.

It is rather difficult to find anything new to say on Decorative Art. Details, going further into a subject than general criticisms and broad principles, require much reading and study, and the knowledge of a specialist who has time to exhaust the literature of the subject. There is no subject on which law is so much laid down at present as art, especially decoration. Infallible nostrums, as it were, are offered on all sides for the adornment of our houses and even of our persons. For rules are even given for the artistic regulation of ladies' dress, though I observe that those ladies who have most regard for their personal appearance avoid availing themselves of the excellent advice offered to them. But general criticisms are easy to make, and general principles are easily laid down. When I presided at the Art Section of the Social Science Association at Liverpool

in 1876, I prepared, with much labour, a Lecture in which I laid down such rules as to what is right and wrong in practical art as occurred to me. By an arrangement which could not be avoided my address was not delivered until the end of the first day's meeting, and I heard, to my dismay, every one of my carefully elaborated principles, which were to convince the world, enunciated by one speaker after another in every paper that was read. There was in fact no discussion among the practical men, as every one was agreed as to the general principles, whether regarding propriety of construction or appropriate styles of decoration. But it is doubtful whether we should approve of all the works executed by the several speakers in accordance with the admirable principles they evidently understood, and on which they spoke so well. I am led to the conclusion, therefore, that to propound general principles is not of much use. People either agree upon them, in which case there is no need of discussion, or they disagree, in which case discussion is of no use. Training and example, not argument, are the only means by which right judgments can be formed. The requisites of decorative, as of all art, are good taste and good workmanship; and for good taste there are no rules. My object, therefore, to-day will be not to set up

any general rules, but to draw some attention to the art of painting as practised by the ancients, illustrating my remarks with a specimen of decoration which has been for a long time in the possession of the Museum, but which, having been placed on a staircase not generally used by the public, may easily have escaped special observation. As regards the historical and literary side of the subject of antique painting, the writings of ancient authors have been ransacked, and everything that is to be learned from them has long ago been published and is familiar to all who have made a study of the subject. It would be impossible for me, therefore, to present you with any information which cannot be gathered from the numerous books, erudite or popular, which are published on this subject, and come out in increasing numbers from year to year. Thus, all the remarks which I have to offer are those of an artist and not of a specialist; and it is probable that many, if not all, of the conclusions to which I shall arrive have been forestalled by others, and that some of them may be contradicted by passages in ancient authors of which I am ignorant. My attention was freshly drawn towards a subject which has always interested me by a visit to Rome and Naples made last autumn, especially by the paintings in the Museo Borbonico,

and still more by those in two houses lately discovered in Rome—that of Germanicus, on the Palatine, of the paintings in which you see admirable copies before you; and that still more beautiful house discovered in the excavations in the garden of the Farnesina palace, neither of which had I ever seen. These copies were presented to the Museum by the Emperor of the French after the house had been discovered in the excavations made by the French on the site of the Palatine hill. They give you now a better idea of the original paintings than even the originals themselves, which have much suffered, since the house has been uncovered, from damp and from fading. As copies they are excellent.

It is quite hopeless to imagine that we shall now ever find any trace of the works of those great painters of antiquity which are known to us from the writings of Pliny or Pausanias. None of them have come down to us. People have even questioned whether they were really deserving of the immense reputation they enjoyed. But, putting aside that, as I shall endeavour to point out, the remains of antique painting which exist appear to me to fully justify the highest praise,—it is doubtful whether any work has acquired and retained a high traditional reputation without deserving it. My object in the first place will be

to show what grounds there may be for arriving at any opinion as to what these paintings were.

None of these great works, as I have said, exist to speak for themselves. There is not, as far as I know, any instance of an antique painting signed by the name of a known artist. Indeed the only signed picture existing, of which I am aware, is the beautiful little painting, or rather drawing in outline, on white marble, which was discovered at Herculaneum, representing four maidens playing at knuckle-bones, and signed, ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ, an artist whose name is not otherwise recorded. The painting no longer exists ; nothing but a faint image is now to be seen ; as is, alas ! too frequently the case with the paintings from Pompeii, which were fresh and brilliant when first discovered.

On vases the names of the artists who painted them are not uncommon, but a list of them would tell us nothing. Of more importance, as throwing some light on the style of antique pictures, are the paintings on the vases themselves. The subject of antique vases is much too vast for me to enter upon here. I give you, as an illustration of style, a single figure from a vase, but any other would illustrate just as well the purity of outline and the completeness of composition which is to be found in all the

designs on the Greek vases of the archaic and best, and even of the later periods. Some of these, as I have elsewhere pointed out, may present to us the treatment by celebrated painters of some of the great traditional subjects. The superb composition on a vase at Naples representing the "Last Night of Troy" may probably be a free copy of the same subject by Polygnotus at Delphi. The resemblance, though not complete, tallies very closely with the description by Pausanias of this work, and the incident of Cassandra clutching the statue of Minerva is in the two cases identical. If this vase painting be not a free rendering of the picture, both are probably in accordance with a fixed traditional treatment. Mr. Birch conjectures the same from the fact that the composition on these vases is frequently better than the drawing.

No doubt the paintings of Polygnotus were in a severe style—on a simple background, without perspective and without incident, possibly of one colour. There was probably no light and shade, and not much modelling. We may indeed conceive him to have held the sort of place in Greek art that Orcagna and the Lorenzetti held in that of Florence and Siena. Sufficiently emancipated from the earliest styles to give full expression to the incidents portrayed, but as yet undeveloped on the side of imita-

tion, their art was incapable of rendering the full force of nature in its more material aspects. But the art of Polygnotus would, in the one quality which makes Greek art superior to any other, far excel the works of the painters I have mentioned, or indeed of any painters of the earlier period of Italian art until it attained its highest eminence with Michael Angelo and Raphael—I mean in the splendid harmony of composition and symmetry of form which we find not only in the Greek sculpture but on the best Greek vases. This splendour of composition—for I can find no other word—we find indeed on the vases of the archaic periods, but the exquisite perception of form, and that wonderful precision of outline which makes us understand the meaning of the anecdote about the rival lines of Apelles and Polygnotus, did not come until later. In these qualities, no doubt, the works of Polygnotus were pre-eminent. We may be certain that the composition was not inferior to the best of those on the vases, and we may assume that the drawing and the style of the form had all the superiority over those beautiful creations which would be the result of an exceptionally gifted artist working on a large scale, and not trammelled by the difficulties of surface and material with which the vase-painter had to contend ;

not the least remarkable feature of Greek art being the steadiness with which the vase-painter would draw figures full of life and action on a rounded surface, in perfect proportion and with an exact line, —a perfection which is unknown to us in any but a mechanical sense.

The sculptures in the pediment of the temple of Ægina were executed between B.C. 500 and 480, more than twenty years before Polygnotus became a citizen of Athens, 460 B.C. These figures, though purely archaic as to the treatment of the head, are much more natural in the limbs, which are remarkable for subtlety of modelling and attention to nature, though treated with the grand generalisation of form which was instinctive with the Greeks. Polygnotus would no doubt pay special attention to his outline, in which he would at least be as perfect as the author of those sculptures. Beyond this it is difficult to realise how far his paintings were carried in the matter of light and shade, or rather of modelling, and gradation of tint and roundness of form—for of light and shade in his works, in the sense of *chiaroscuro*, there was probably none at this epoch, or indeed for a long period after. The paintings found about fifteen years ago in a tomb at Vulci, although probably much later than Polygnotus, may give us a

clue to his style. These are arranged in the bas-relief form, are somewhat advanced in modelling, and on a background of a single colour—white, I think.¹

Nor is it easy to guess at Polygnotus's style of colouring. If we are to believe Pliny he was very limited as to the colours he used, for Pliny distinctly informs us that the ancients used none but white, yellow, red, and black, in the production of their immortal works, naming painters down to Apelles and Nicomachus, who lived from about B.C. 350 to 300. But Athenian lekythoi, with other colours than these four, are found dating from an earlier time than Apelles. Moreover, we know that other colours—blue certainly—were used in the decoration of temples long before the time of Apelles, or indeed of Polygnotus. It is hardly necessary to mention that the Egyptians used a great variety of colours a thousand years or more before the commencement of Greek art. The statement, therefore, is incredible. It is true that these four colours exclusively were commonly used in the wall-paintings in the Etruscan tombs, and probably also in the temples which have disappeared. It is possible, therefore, that Pliny had

¹ When I was in Rome I saw these paintings, but being out of health I was not in a position to make notes, and am uncertain on this point.

made a mistake in his notes, and referred to a wrong one. This is a hazardous conjecture, but I cannot account for his assertion in any other way. Now, according to Pliny, Polygnotus was not included by the Greeks in the category of their great painters. He informs us that they reckoned the origin of their school of painting from the 90th Olympiad—about 420 B.C.—twenty-five years *after* Phidias had made his reputation, and forty years after Polygnotus was made a citizen of Athens. They looked upon him and the painters of his time, no doubt as the critics of the last century looked on the painters previous to Raphael, *i.e.* they did not acknowledge their existence; the only exception made by our writers on art being in favour of Masaccio, who seems to have been known as having supplied the original from which Raphael borrowed his figure of Paul preaching at Athens. In remote parts of England it would appear that until lately there were owners of pictures who still lived in this faith, for it was not uncommon in the earlier days of the Old Masters' Exhibition at the Royal Academy for pictures of the pre-Raphaelite school, of the most incongruous styles and dates, to come up under the name of Masaccio, by which they were christened probably early in the century. Latterly, Botticelli has been the favourite. Such was the view the Greek

writers took apparently of the founders of their school; but Pliny was more enlightened or more inquisitive, and he has begun his history of Greek painting from the year 700 B.C. Still we may suppose that before Polygnotus there was no painter whose works had a very distinctive or independent character: most probably they were painted in perfectly flat tints, like the generality of those in the Etruscan tombs, and like the Egyptian wall-pictures; and it is quite in accordance with what we know of the superior difficulty of painting over sculpture, that the art should have still been in an imperfect stage of development, and not considered worthy of record, at a time when Phidias was producing his immortal works. I cannot but feel, however, that imperfect as they were, there must have been a special charm about such paintings as ornamented the Propylæa at Athens and the council-chamber at Delphi. The absence of *chiaroscuro* and of background must have enhanced the perfection of the outline and brought into relief the balance and symmetry of the composition, just as the simple colouring in the vases leaves us free to concentrate our admiration on the same qualities. As far as the art was then developed the painting of Polygnotus was probably perfect. Limited in colour, the modelling, if there were any,

of the simplest kind, and carried no further than with the early painters of the Italian school, but highly idealised and extremely subtle in form and outline, it must have had that splendour of composition which, to judge from the vases and the bas-reliefs, lost nothing of its richness and harmony in the transition from the archaic to the finest style.

The school of painting soon developed the qualities which were to make it more complete and more acceptable to a people who were nourished on the unsurpassable grandeur of the architecture and sculpture of the age of Pericles. Henceforward in Pliny we meet with numerous anecdotes which, though trivial, all point in the same direction,—to the continually increasing perfection of the imitative power. I have no intention of taking you through the whole history of Greek painting as recorded by Pliny. If I have dwelt so long on speculations as to the art of Polygnotus, it was, first, because this state of the Greek art where form predominates over the lower, but not unnecessary, arts of effect, is one which is peculiarly attractive; and secondly, by way of suggesting that where the art which they ignored or put in the second place must have been so perfect in itself, the art which they acknowledged must

have risen to transcendent heights of skill, combining qualities any one of which, completely acquired, is in itself sufficient to make a great painter. It is true that Pliny, as I have hinted, relates a number of childish anecdotes about Zeuxis and other painters, which are evidently mere popular traditions founded on the wonder of the ignorant, always first aroused by skill in imitation. The birds, indeed, who pecked at the grapes of Zeuxis must have been very discriminating; and, as it seems, he could reckon on their judgment, for, according to the story, he exposed a second picture purposely to their criticism, of a young man carrying a basket of the same fruit, when the birds came again to peck at the grapes, to the great disappointment of Zeuxis, who would thus appear to have painted the young man so badly that the birds took no notice of his presence; a presumption which it is difficult to entertain concerning the painter whose Helen was world-renowned.

But besides these and similar foolish and impossible stories Pliny constantly dwells on the increasing perfection of form which the Greek painters developed from the time of Zeuxis to the culmination of the art under Apelles and Protogenes. The Venus Anadyomene of Apelles seems to have been universally admired as having attained the

highest point to which the art of painting could reach, and we must suppose it to have combined all possible excellencies of form, colour, and workmanship. But when we have come to this conclusion we have exhausted conjecture, for I doubt if it be possible for us to form any exact conception of such a painting.

In expression I believe the Greek painters to have been paramount. I have a vivid recollection of the head of the young Achilles in a painting at Naples, a painting by an artist evidently not of the highest rank, where he is being taught to play on the lyre by Chiron. A more glowing expression of absorbed interest in a face radiant with youth and life it would be impossible to imagine. Aristides, a contemporary of Apelles, is thus referred to as "painting the soul;" he painted a suppliant with such a look that you seemed to hear the words coming out of his mouth; and the portraits of Apelles were said to be so living that fortune-tellers drew horoscopes from them.

If, again, there be any doubt in your minds as to the Greek painters having understood the use of light and shade to produce the effects of nature, as we understand it in these days, I would draw your attention to the painting of the street which you

have before you in this copy of the paintings from the house of Germanicus.

With the aid of the Greek vases, the Etruscan wall-paintings, especially the later and more advanced works from the tomb at Volsci, and the well-known style of Greek bas-reliefs, we can, as I have shown, form a fair idea of the appearance of the works of Polygnotus. But there is this great difference between these and the paintings of later artists, that the style of Polygnotus was distinctly decorative and monumental; although asserting its claim to admiration on its own account, it was still as much part of the general architectonic scheme as the Panathenaic frieze or the statue of Theseus are parts of the decorative scheme of the Parthenon. Not so the works of Zeuxis or Apelles and Protogenes, which are described as separate works, forming no part of a system of design, although frequently painted for and placed in temples. We know that they were movable, for many of them were transferred to Rome, and were bought and sold at the public auctions. The Venus of Apelles, for instance, was in the temple of Julius Cæsar at Rome; it had partly perished in the time of Augustus, and was finally destroyed by worms in the panel, and removed by Nero. I imagine, then, that the style of Polyg-

notus, if his works were before us, would give us no more clue to the style of the Alexandrian painters than we should gain from a painting by Orcagna towards forming a conception of Titian or Rembrandt.

On the other hand, all the paintings of a later date which have been preserved are wall-paintings, and executed by such different methods from encaustic and varnished cabinet pictures painted on panel, that they can hardly help us towards forming an opinion. We may probably find in them, as we find in the vases, repetitions of the earlier paintings of the Greek school, and I think it extremely likely that in the panels, which form a conspicuous feature of the mural decorations at Pompeii and elsewhere, we should frequently, if we only knew, find copies—traditional copies only—of some of their great works. Unfortunately we have no means of judging, except, as far as I know, in one instance, to which I shall now refer. It is probable that in the works of Zeuxis, and Timanthes his contemporary, attention to form and composition still predominated over colour and effect. A painting from Pompeii, of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, may possibly preserve for us the treatment of this subject by Timanthes in his celebrated picture, which we may the more readily believe as Agamemnon is there represented

with his face veiled, as in the well-known description ; but this painting is by a very inferior hand, and can give us but the tradition of a tradition : it is indeed so imperfect that the painter has forgotten to finish the legs of Iphigenia where they should appear on the farther side of the personage who is carrying her to sacrifice. This very imperfection, however, would seem to point to its being a copy executed in a perfunctory manner, probably from a bad sketch ; for in a first conception an artist would hardly forget to complete his figure. The painting, however, as it is, is still decorative in form and manner of treatment,—far less pictorial than many others found at Pompeii. We may thus conceive Timanthes and Zeuxis to have arrived at that fine stage of development of the art when the figure, carried to its highest perfection, still predominates in the composition, the background and accessories being kept quite subordinate. If it be permitted to hazard a conjecture as to the character of the paintings of Zeuxis, I should be inclined to regard them as combining the pictorial and monumental character in about the same degree as the exquisite little picture of the Graces by Raphael, avowedly an attempt at the antique style ; or, may we venture to bring into the comparison, at least as regards sim-

plicity of arrangement and perfection of composition, the Creation of Adam and the Creation of Eve in the Sistine chapel?

After this we are lost in conjecture. Apelles and Protogenes, a century later, may have added the richness and colouring of Titian to the grace of Parrhasius, and may have even achieved the fulness of light and shade to be found in Rembrandt; but of this we know nothing. This alone is pretty certain, that their paintings had lost the distinctive characteristics of a purely decorative art, and had by this time taken a widely different form from those of the time of Polygnotus.

When the particular style of decoration which is familiar to us from the wall-paintings of Pompeii first came into vogue it is difficult to say. From the tomb of Volsci, in which the figures are arranged as in a bas-relief and form the chief feature of the decorative scheme, to the Pompeian paintings, where they are quite subordinate to a more or less extravagant, but always elegant, architectural framework, there is a gap, which the discovery of the house in the gardens of the Farnesina at Rome, supposed to be of the Republican period, does not entirely fill; for the system in this, though more sober and consistent, and less fantastic, is already the

same as at Pompeii. In this beautiful house, and in the house of Livia or Germanicus, as it is variously called, we have, with the exceptions I shall proceed to mention, the finest specimens of antique decoration that exist. The former especially is evidently painted by the best artists of the time, and various painters have been employed on the figure subjects in the panels. There are no paintings so good from Pompeii, except from one house, the name of which I do not remember, and these remain only in small fragments, arranged on a wall in one of the corridors of the Museo Borbonico, as nearly according to their original disposition as their imperfect state permitted. These fragments, however, display an art of design and a skill of execution which fully justifies the most extravagant estimate which is recorded of Greek artists. In certain qualities of execution they are unrivalled by the best work of any of the great schools of the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. Freedom of hand and certainty of touch are the first requisites of decorative painting in no matter what style; but they are combined here with a rich quality of impasto, laid on with a full brush (but with supreme delicacy), in gradations which, though as clean as mosaic in their precision, are as full and round in modelling as though done by Velasquez:

or a better comparison may be found, as we are treating of ornamental and foliated forms, in the fine but broadly treated details of the wreaths of ivy and vine which adorn the figures in a Bacchanalian picture by Nicholas Poussin in the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition; the same, indeed, may be seen, though more obscured by time and varnish, in the two magnificent pictures of similar subjects by the same master in the National Gallery: they will at least convey an idea of the special quality of painting to which I refer. Imagine the whole decorations of a room carried out with the artistic perfection of these details, and with all the beauty of surface which the elaborately prepared stucco grounds of the ancients provided for their artists, and you may realise for yourselves a specimen of decorative art such as none but Greek artists have ever produced, and such as in our hurried world is not likely to be produced again. From these disconnected fragments I have gained a more certain belief in the surpassing excellence of Greek painting than reading or imagination or analogy could ever have supplied. I do not know that there are engravings of these paintings, but if there are, they would give no idea of the wonderful execution: Giovanni da Udine is a coarse dauber by comparison.

The walls of the house from the Farnesina garden¹ are divided by columns of great elegance, the intercolumnar spaces being filled with panels, some containing figure subjects, others ornament pure and simple, others figures combined with ornament, and are enriched with compartments framed by columns and pediments, everything being executed in painting, and with as close an imitation of the true relief of nature as the artist could achieve. A reference to the copy of the paintings in the Palatine house will show you a treatment so precisely similar in character,—note the bases of the columns,—that it is difficult to resist the inference that the same artist was employed in the decoration of both these houses.

This arrangement of columns and panels is the universal system, though varied infinitely, and carried in some of the Pompeian decorations to extremes of fanciful arrangement, involving complex and impossible architectural construction. But there is a peculiar feature in the decoration of the Farnesina house which, so far as I know, is unique; I mean

¹ The decorations in fresco and stucco of this house have been removed from the walls, and placed in a museum in the Lungara. They are in remarkably good preservation on the whole. Photographs of them are to be had in Rome (possibly in England), and may be compared with the copy of the Palatine house, which is in the South Kensington Museum.

the occasional introduction of panels with figures in outline on a white ground, drawn evidently by artists of the highest skill, for they have all the beauty of the best outlines on the Greek vases. The exquisite taste with which these outlines are enriched with slight touches of colour reminds one of the same graceful treatment on the Athenian lekythoi.

Those who have not seen the original Pompeian paintings, nor noticed the copies now before you (which are admirably faithful in colour to the originals), have probably conceived a very false idea of antique decoration, for, with the exception of some ill-coloured prints, the only other guide within reach that I know of is the Pompeian court at the Crystal Palace, done, I believe, under the direction of Mr. Owen Jones. Mr. Owen Jones appears to have thought that in decoration one blue is as good as another, and one red as good as another;¹ and he was evidently quite satisfied to have produced the coarse and offensive result we see in his Pompeian court, instead of the harmonious

¹ Owen Jones's book is, unfortunately, the only book in English giving anything like a consistent history of styles with illustrations, and as such is in use in the Art Department schools. If it were not for that, I should like to see the whole edition at the bottom of the sea, rather than that it should be put into the student's hand.

effect which is the constant characteristic of antique decorative art ; in which the harmonies, though frequently vigorous in their contrasts of colour, are always splendid in their vigour ; while no less frequently they are remarkable for delicacy and refinement.

A masterly freedom of hand is a marked characteristic of all the antique decorative painting which has come down to us. The work, although very highly finished, is done with extreme simplicity. There is no loading of colour, but perfect expression of touch, and everything appears to be done at once and without the slightest effort. Certainty of hand and executive skill held as high a place in the estimation of ancient artists as the conception of the subject, or its composition and design. They owe their freedom, moreover, to the fact that their art was a vivid and vigorous expression of their impressions of nature. Nothing is more remarkable in the Pompeian painting, even when by an inferior hand, than the impression it conveys of a fresh and healthy life ; the creations all live, the gestures are spontaneous and natural ; there is no straining after emotions. In this sense the very finest art of the Italian school in no way approaches the antique, because it is not in

the same way the expression of life and humanity. In their statues and pictures the Greeks made every effort to attain perfection; but in their works of decoration they seem quite unconscious of any effort at producing a fine thing: they merely expressed without after-thought their instinctive feeling for the grace and beauty of the life surrounding them. The only parallel I can think of to this perfectly spontaneous art, is in the vivacity with which Leech gave vent to his feeling for the humour of English life. The Greek's instinct for beauty was expressed just as spontaneously and completely, and equally without any intention of making a fine work of art. If you wish to know further what I mean by this freedom, I would refer you to some stuccoes in the Museum from a Greek tomb in Southern Italy, especially to a reclining female figure executed without the slightest effort, apparently with a few strokes of a knife or a stick, and the finger and thumb; but which, nevertheless, is a model of grace and elegance, both as to movement and in the form of the limbs. The state of mind which gives life to so delightful an art is one that we cannot approach; for you will see at once the vast difference between an art such as Leech's, which is on the verge of caricature, and one in which the most exquisite

perceptions of refinement and beauty are not only instinctive but exclude everything else. The only other art which has the same spontaneous character is that of the Japanese, and for the same reason. Their art is the expression of the enjoyment they derive from nature, and from producing the best workmanship of which they are capable. There is again no conscious effort at the production of a fine work of art: but with them the sense of beauty does not extend to the human figure; in the representation of birds and flowers they are unrivalled, and their landscapes are vivid expressions of the charm of nature, especially in her homelike characteristics. And while we find the highest perfection and completeness in their workmanship, we find also that, like the Greeks, they do not depend upon laborious finish for arriving at truth of nature; for the merest blot of a bird on the wing is as full of life and expression as their most highly-wrought productions in bronze or lacquer.

There is a curious point for consideration in connection with the decorative effect of the wall-paintings of the ancients, and here again we find a resemblance to Japanese art—I mean as to how far ignorance of perspective was an assistance to them in covering their walls with the scenic architecture with which

we are so familiar. That the Greeks never discovered the correct rules of perspective is certain. They came very near it, as I have elsewhere pointed out, for some of the lines occasionally converge to one point, but it is evidently a point selected at random ; they never discovered that all parallel lines in perspective converge to a point on the horizon ; and the fact that we never find correct perspective in the works that are preserved is a proof that the great artists of the school were equally ignorant with the decorators, for the rules once known could never be lost.

To refer again to this copy from the paintings in the house of Germanicus,—the lines of the cornice and of the bases of the columns are drawn to one point, about the centre of the picture, and so far they are in correct perspective ; but in the view of the street, which is introduced into the composition, there are no two lines running to one point ; all are drawn at random, showing that the painter had no real knowledge. On the other hand, this very painting, and another of an interior, show that the Greeks were perfectly conversant with the manner of producing the effects of Nature by light and shade in the manner in which we understand it. Frequently the painter has given up all attempt at perspective, and having,

as in many of the Pompeian paintings, chosen an angle at which the receding lines should be drawn, has made them all parallel to each other, which is nothing more or less than isometric projection. This is also not unfrequent in Japanese art. In other cases he is in hopeless confusion; some perspective lines are drawn to one point, some to another, and some even diverge as they recede from the eye. This may be seen in the decorations of the Baths of Titus; and we have only to look at these decorations, which cover a very extensive wall-surface, to feel that it would be very convenient in decorative art not to know perspective; for beyond a certain distance from the centre of vision the drawing becomes so exaggerated, and correct perspective looks so untrue from every point of view but one, that it is impossible to use it; and in any extended decorative scheme it has to be wilfully falsified; as we see in the Sistine chapel, where a separate point of sight is chosen for each of the prophets and sibyls; so skilfully managed, however, as to create no unpleasant effect. I must confess that I consider that the ancients were fortunate in knowing as little as they did. The daring with which they crowd a wall with complicated architectural structures of the most fantastic nature, and with the

happiest effect, would perhaps have failed them if they had been obliged to restrain it within rules ; though doubtless they would have found a way to get over the difficulty. Meanwhile the struggle with conscience must have been sore with the more scrupulous of their artists : the effort to do right is so obvious that we feel they must have known that they were wrong. In their landscapes, which are delightfully suggestive, though entirely subordinated to the human interest, they fall into the wildest confusion. These little paintings of landscapes will show you how very far they were from giving a true representation. Pure landscape was a subject to which the Greeks never turned their eyes in art or poetry.

In all antique decorative art, except of the lowest order of housepainting, there is a certain vigour, an exuberance, I know not how to express it, which is peculiarly its own, and which does not preclude elegance. Look at the festoons of fruit in these frescoes from the house of Germanicus. The peculiar quality is indescribable, but we feel that nothing in Italian art has precisely the same. The borders to the Raphael paintings in the Farnesina palace by Giovanni da Udine, are rich, finely drawn, full of growth ; but after all they cannot be compared with

these festoons by a nameless artist. Is it the way in which they hang? is it that they are more real? is it the effect of the strong contrast of dark foliage with the ivory white ground? or is it the delicacy of the ribbons contrasting with the ponderous festoons? Which of these makes the difference? Or is it not rather all combined, with the life and vigour of a young world added? The ancient artist saw such wreaths continually before his eyes, for they were a constant form of adornment in houses and temples. The Italian was making an imitation of the antique, not without an intention to realise as regards growth and arrangement; but he was painting a conventional, not an actual, form of decoration, and he was conscious of doing a fine thing.¹

¹ I have made no mention of the exquisite stucco decorations of the ceiling of the antique house from the Farnesina garden. They are the best that have come down to us; and for taste, design, and delicacy of execution, combined as usual with a manipulative skill which, though rapid, never fails by the thickness of a line, they are unrivalled. The wings of the genii are a study in themselves for the way in which they grow from the shoulder (very different to the cumbrous naturalism and academic style of the newly discovered reliefs at Pergamus); the limbs and extremities, the feet especially, are lightness and elegance itself; the draperies move and float. But without illustrations it is hopeless to convey any impression of the perfect *taste* and feeling for life which distinguishes these reliefs, and brings them into competition with the finished works of known sculptors of the best period, such as Scopas in his Bacchanalian figures.

I have said that I was about to lay down no rules for decorative art ; and I have merely drawn your attention discursively to some points of interest in the history of painting, and to some examples. If my remarks should tend in any way to revive the interest in antique art, in which cultivated Englishmen took the lead at the end of the last century and at the beginning of this, they will not have been useless. We have become so familiar with the Pompeian style of decoration, and the very simplicity of Greek art is so misleading, that there is a danger lest its infinite superiority to *every* other should be lost sight of. I say superiority to *every* other art, for we know that their sculpture exceeds anything done since, and I affirm that on certain points of spontaneity of life and vigour, the best Italian painters were children even to those secondary artists whose works remain for us to judge from. In the great painting of Ceres from Pompeii, at Naples, fortunately admirably preserved, though somewhat faded, there is in the representation of the goddess a dignity which is truly superhuman, and all the more striking because it is felt, not studied. No one of the moderns gave more majesty to the hand than Michael Angelo—witness the hands of the Almighty in the Creation of Adam, and in the Division of Light

from Darkness—but the majesty is, so to speak, intentional. You can trace the process of mind, and the study from nature of which these hands are the expression. Not so with the hand and arm of the Ceres ; pure instinct led to its conception ; the hand has the breadth and power of a powerful woman's hand, with the softness and innocence of a baby's, which has never felt toil or exertion. The attitude is simplicity itself, the drawing is executed with a few sweeping strokes of the brush, and the modelling with equally simple washes. I know nothing which gives the impression of absolute mastery over material so completely as this painting. The grapes in the basket are done equally with a few strokes and touches, yet they are as luscious, as transparent, and as round as in any Dutch picture. The antelope is life itself. The wings of the attendant genius, done also with light washes of colour, and a few freely but accurately drawn lines, have in texture all the lightness and feathery character which could be expressed by the most laboured painting ; while the growth and radiation of the feathers is exact to nature. It is a sketch in fact, but a sketch which gives not only the truth, but all the *beauty* of nature. And yet this is not the work of a celebrated artist ; and it is of a late date—three hundred years and more later than

Apelles. We remain now, as before, lost in wonder as to what the works of the great period of Greek art must have been.

I the more regret the decline of the taste for antique art in England, because so many of the beautiful works collected up to fifty years ago by cultivated men are leaving the country, and none seem to be entering it. The French have replaced us in this respect, while our collectors of the present day devote themselves to blue china; a taste, it is true, which requires no education. Of all the hundreds of the exquisite little terra-cotta figures from Tanagra, which have been discovered within the last ten or twelve years, not a dozen, I believe, have found their way into private collections in this country; there are a few in the British Museum. The French have the good taste to buy them all. I do not imagine that the best of these exquisite works, the purest expression of the Greek artistic instinct, ever rose in price to that of a hawthorn jar at Christie's, and yet there is more art in the little finger of the man who made one of those figures than in the whole Chinese nation.

To return to my subject, and to conclude. The experiment of decorating in the Pompeian style has been tried, and it is now completely out of fashion; and it cannot be said that a satisfactory result has

hitherto been arrived at in our modern imitations. All decoration which is not Gothic is, it is true, in a certain sense, in the antique style, in that it has descended with constant modification from the imitation which sprang up with the Italian Renaissance; notably in the works of Udine and Poccetti. But I refer now to the modern imitations which arose from the discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii in the last century. These cannot be said to have led to much; partly on account of that indifference to the *quality* of colour to which I have already referred; but still more because the mistake has been in the literal copying of the art of another age, when the conditions of life were absolutely different to our modern life; especially in taking accessories and ornaments which have no meaning for us. But I can conceive that with due modifications, derived from whatever charm and beauty is to be found in our own surroundings, combined with architecture (the principles of which are eternal), a consistent form of decoration might be devised, which should have all the elegance and picturesqueness of antique decorative art, and which would certainly afford play for the invention of individual artists. In any case it would make a cheerful variety from the eternal dados and diapers with which we are so wearisomely

surrounded. I cannot but think that the recent discoveries at Rome, which have been the principal subject of this Lecture, might form a new starting-point for fresh experiments in this direction.

LECTURE IV.

BY J. T. MICKLETHWAITE.

ENGLISH PARISH CHURCHES.¹

I COME to-day partly to describe the history of our old churches and partly to plead their cause. I shall begin with a description of the life of the English parish church, from the very beginning of its history, and in fact almost before that, until the present time, and then I shall have a few words to say at the end about what we ought to do with it now. I claim for our English parish churches that they are the most interesting relics of the past which remain in the land, far more so than pre-historic antiquities like Stonehenge and the like, because the history of them is done, and we have no share in it. They had their life in the far past, but it was over before what we know of history began, and we know them only as dead relics. Our churches, on the

¹ This Lecture was not given from MS., and has been written out since, partly from memory and partly from a shorthand writer's report.

other hand, are still what they were when first built; and now, as then, people go for worship and for the sacraments to them as they have done for, it may be, fifteen hundred years. Parish churches seem to me to be in a manner more interesting than the cathedral or abbey churches, because they are more specially the spontaneous product of the people, and not, as the others often were, the work of powerful magnates or rich corporations. The parish churches are also actually older in their traditions than the cathedral or abbey churches. We generally know the history of these. Many of them date only from the eleventh or twelfth century; and the oldest from the mission of Augustine at the end of the sixth century. Now, I claim for parish churches that they are older than that. When Augustine and his monks came here from Italy, they came to a land where Christianity had been known before. Augustine and his people were all monks and foreigners; the early bishops of his line were also monks, and, if not foreigners themselves, were at least educated by foreigners, and in foreign traditions. They were missionaries, and it was natural that the churches which they built should be as nearly as they could make them what they had been accustomed to at home. The church which Augustine built at Can-

terbury, and the few others of that date of which we know anything, have a very distinct type about them. They are, as many of you know, rude imitations of the contemporary Italian churches, and are what is called Basilican in plan. Augustine's cathedral at Canterbury has been gone for the last eight hundred years. But at Brixworth there may still be seen the greater part of a church built by his followers as early as 680. Although it was not a church of the first class, it is a good-sized building. It has a broad nave with aisles, and an apse at the end, with a sort of passage round it encircling a crypt. That is totally different from anything we have in our parish churches, and one may fairly say that the earlier we trace them the less like it do we find them. We have, then, the curious fact that the people, when building churches for their own use, did not follow the type set before them by their spiritual teachers, and we are led to seek whence they obtained their model. Now, Augustine came to a land, though not to a people, which had known Christianity before. At the time of the withdrawal of the Romans we must remember that all the more civilised Britons were Christians. I know that this has been denied, but the little knowledge we have of the history of Britain after the withdrawal of the Romans

almost proves that the Christians were then in such a majority as to form what may be called the public opinion of the time. We may gather this from the story of St. Germanus and the *Alleluia* victory. St. Germanus was a Gallic bishop who had come here on some ecclesiastical business just at the time of the chaos caused by the withdrawal of the Romans. That withdrawal, it should be remembered, was not simply the retirement of a few troops, but the entire removal of the whole official organisation, both military and civil, to which the Britons had been accustomed for centuries to look for government and protection. Thus abandoned, the Britons could afford no effectual resistance to the barbarous Picts and Scots who invaded them. They had courage, but to make it effective they wanted leaders whom they could trust; and in their need they turned to Germanus, probably because they looked on him as one of the old governing class. The bishop accepted the command, and you all know the story of how he planted his men in a valley where the enemy found themselves suddenly assailed on all sides by loud cries of *Alleluia*, and fled in panic without striking a blow. Now the point I wish to call attention to is, that Germanus could not have used this stratagem with success unless the men under him, or at least the greater

part of them, had been Christians, with whom the cry was a household word.

If, then, these men were Christians they would have churches of some sort. And although nothing of the kind now exists in England which can with any likelihood be assigned to a date earlier than the coming of St. Augustine, we may, I think, form a very good idea of what these early churches were like. Ireland and Scotland both received their Christianity from the civilised Britons, and it is evident that their usages were like those of the parent church. Now in these, and especially in Ireland, there are still the remains of churches of a type quite distinct from the Italian. Some are of very early date. How early I will not now stay to discuss. It is enough to say that there are amongst them some which, by their construction, seem to be contemporary with the rude dwellings known as "bee-hive" houses. I give a plan of one of them at Killaloe, which is a typical example of a large class. This, which we may call the Celtic type of plan, is made up of a small sanctuary, always square at the east end, and communicating, by an arch scarcely larger than a doorway, with a rectangular nave, always without aisles.

A church like this differs altogether from the



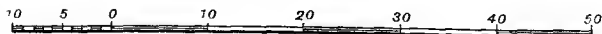
KILLALOE ——— IRISH



BOARHUNT ——— SAXON



KEMPLEY ——— NORMAN



SCALE OF FEET.

Italian basilica, with its aisles, its apse, and its wide transverse arches. But its plan is exactly that of many of the earliest English churches which remain. As an example I have given the plan of Boarhunt in Hampshire, drawn to the same scale as the Celtic example, and it will be at once seen that the two are the same in their differences from the basilica. Here again we have absence of aisles, the square end and the narrow sanctuary arch. It is, then, evident that, notwithstanding the influence and example of the Italian missionaries, the Celtic type of church survived the Pagan period, and in fact became that of the parish churches as against the monastic and cathedral churches, which for the most part followed the Italian tradition. Whether this comes from a survival of the Britons and their church amongst the English inhabitants after their settlement here, or from the earliest English Christians having restored to use the Celtic churches, the ruins of which would exist amongst them, I leave to others to dispute; but the fact remains, and it was due to some widely spread cause, for we find it the same in all parts of England, from the north to the south, and from the east to the west.

It is exceedingly probable that many of our old parish churches stand on sites already so occupied

even in British times. The division into parishes is of remote antiquity. We find it already existing as far back as we can carry our inquiries, and it may well have been here before even the earliest introduction of Christianity. Until almost our own time new parishes were never made. Where towns decayed, parishes in them became united for lack of ability in the remaining inhabitants to keep them up separately; but where they increased, new parishes were not formed. In such a case the parish church was enlarged, and if that did not suffice chapels of ease were provided, but no one ever thought of dividing the parish. Thus it comes that towns which, like London, York, Norwich, and Exeter, were important places in the Roman times, have come down to us divided into many parishes, each with its own church, generally not large; whilst Lynn and Boston, and others, which rose to importance during the middle ages, were, till modern times, each of but one parish; and in them we find churches which, although they had only the status of chapels of ease, yet rank in size with the largest parish churches in the country.

So far as I know, we have not any record of the building of a new parish church earlier than the seventeenth century. Old ones were rebuilt over and over again, but except in such a case as Winchelsea,

where circumstances led to the abandonment of an old site and the removal of the church to another place, we never hear of a new one being built. Even so far back as Canute's restoration of Christianity here, after the ravages of the Danes, we are told, not that he *built* churches, but that he *rebuilt* those which he and his father had destroyed.

With such evidence of the unchangeableness of the old parishes, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the divisions are themselves older than Christianity, and that, when the time came for the men of each parish to provide themselves with a church, they often did it on a site already appropriated to some public use. When St. Gregory, probably not knowing that the remains of Christian buildings already existed in the land, advised St. Augustine to consecrate heathen temples for churches, he advised what it is likely enough the Britons themselves had done centuries before St. Gregory's time.

But to return to the fabrics. We have seen that in the first centuries of English Christianity there were in use two distinct types of plan, the *monastic*, introduced by the Italian missionaries, and being a copy of the Italian basilica, and what we may call the *secular*, used by the people generally, and being a continuation of the British type. It is natural that

as time went on there should have been some mixing of the two types. The original British plan was not adapted either to the accommodation of any considerable number of people, or to any sort of architectural display, and whilst it continued in use for small churches, when larger ones were wanted their builders borrowed the wide transverse arches and sometimes the apsidal end from the basilica. I think this mixed type was not in use earlier than the tenth century. Transepts were added to it, very timidly indeed at first; but by the middle of the eleventh century we find regular cross churches, with central towers, as at Stow, Dover, and Stanton Lacy. Aisles are borrowed from the basilica, and I do not know of any instance of them in a secular church earlier than the Conquest.

The middle of the eleventh century was the beginning of a new architectural era in England. Even before the coming of William and his followers the Norman style had made its appearance here, and brought with it a new set of traditions, which completely supplanted the old, so far as the monastic type of church is concerned. Before the end of the twelfth century, besides the foundation of a large number of new ones, every cathedral and abbey church in the land was rebuilt on a plan which,

although it may be remotely derived from the basilica, is quite different from anything to be found here in what are called Saxon times, and is not in any way descended from it. But the secular type of church, which it is our present purpose to consider, survived this Conquest as it had done the earlier one, and, in spite of the change in architectural style, continued to rule in parish churches. Nearly all old parish churches which do not contain remains of pre-Norman work can be traced back to rebuilding in the twelfth century. Small churches of this date, with the plans practically unaltered, are not uncommon. I figure one from Kempsey in Gloucestershire, to the same scale as the Celtic and Saxon examples already described, and a glance will show that it is practically identical with them. We have, again, the aisleless nave, the small chancel, the narrow arch between them, and the square east end. Now, nearly all our smaller parish churches, if they do not still keep this form, can be traced back to it. The apse, indeed, occurs in a few examples; but it was never common, and the square end soon again became the rule in English parish churches, as, in spite of occasional eccentricities, it has continued to be to the present day.

As the smaller Norman parish churches continued the Celtic type of plan, so the larger did the "mixed"

type, which had already been developed before the introduction of Norman architecture ; and they may nearly all be traced back to either an aisleless cross church, with a central tower, or to a like form with the omission of the transepts. As these larger churches generally belong to more important places, it is not so common to find unaltered examples of them as it is of the smaller, which serve for many a village as well now as when they were first built.

The general rebuilding was scarcely complete when there began a series of alterations and additions which so completely changed most of the churches that it is only by a careful study and comparison of them that we can discover that they all did at first belong to one of the types I have described. The course of these changes is singularly alike in all, although some began it earlier and went on faster and farther than others did. Sometimes, where a church, or a part of it, has been rebuilt after additions have been made, elements in the plan which really belong to different periods may at first sight appear as though they were of the same. But a little examination will generally reveal the true history, and when a link is wanting it may be supplied from what we have learned in other places ; for there is a comparative anatomy of churches, just as there is of beasts.

One important matter to be remembered in studying the history of old churches is, that the old men never ceased to use them if they could help it. They never pulled a church down to build a new one on its site. They wanted it for daily use, and however extensive their alterations were, they carried them out bit by bit, so that some part of it was always fit for use.

I will now, by way of illustration, trace the history of one church from the twelfth century to the sixteenth; and I select that of Wakefield, my native town, not because it has changed more than others,—for its growth has been exactly the normal one,—but because I have had the opportunity to study it closely, when it was dissected in the process of “restoration,” and have proofs of each successive change.¹

A church probably stood on this site from the earliest times, but we cannot trace it in the fabric earlier than the twelfth century. At that time there was an aisleless cross church, which, if it had not a central tower, was at least intended to have one; but it probably had it. As nearly always happened to important churches, very soon after it was built

¹ When this Lecture was delivered, a series of plans of the church in the many stages of its growth were exhibited, which it has not been thought necessary to reproduce here.

it received the addition of a north aisle to the nave. This aisle was added for the sake of the additional accommodation it gave, and was put on the north side rather than the south, because the cemetery was on the south, and our ancestors were unwilling to encroach upon it, except in what they considered a case of necessity. In due time the necessity generally came, as it did here in the thirteenth century, when a south aisle was added to the nave. And I may here remark in passing that those large collections of bones which we have seen stowed away at Ripon and Hythe and elsewhere, and of which the guides delight to tell such strange tales, are simply what have been collected when the graveyards have been dug up at the time of the extension of the churches over them. At both the places named there have been large additions of this sort, and in the accounts of the rebuilding of the nave of Ripon there is a regular item, *pro curriando les bones*.

The next change at Wakefield was a considerable one, little less than a complete rebuilding of the church, and enough to call for its reconsecration, which took place in 1329. The central tower was now gone; probably it either fell or had to be taken down on account of its insecurity. Twelfth century towers were often badly built, and this one would

have had its supports much weakened by the addition of the aisles. In its place was built a chancel, with a span roof, to which the transepts became side chapels. A wide and lofty chancel arch was built, and the pillars on both sides of the nave were raised considerably, and new arches put above them. The aisles were also rebuilt, probably taking in more ground than they had done before, and the church was entirely transformed into one of the "Decorated" period.

After this there came a pause, during which, perhaps, men employed themselves in furnishing their new church. But early in the fifteenth century they began to think of adding a tower to it; and as nearly everybody else did in like case, they chose to put it at the west end. These western towers are, I believe, always additions, however early they may be. We find them of all dates, although it was not the rule for parish churches to be provided with steeples before the fifteenth century. A steeple was an expensive addition to a church, and the old men often spread the cost of it over a great number of years,—not by borrowing money and paying it off by degrees, as might be done now, but by building slowly, as they collected funds to do it with. This went on sometimes for the greater part of a century; and as

people wanted to use the church meanwhile, they took care so to arrange the work that it should not be necessary to interfere with the main building until it was nearly finished. This they generally managed by building the tower on new ground, outside the existing church, at the west end; and then, when all was ready, and it could be done without any delay, they lengthened the nave till it joined on to the new tower. This process has been applied to by far the greater number of our old parish churches, and it may generally be traced in them. We find it not only in churches which had before been without towers, but in a great many which, like this at Wakefield, had once had them in the middle. If, for any reason, a central tower had to come down, it would be most inconvenient to block up the middle of the church for years whilst it was being rebuilt, and so men generally preferred to build a new one at the west end. And most central towers did have to come down, either from their own weakness or because, after the addition of aisles to the church, the great piers of the towers were found to be too much in the way.

The tower was sometimes built close to the church, so that very little lengthening was necessary to join them; but sometimes it was some distance away,

and a bay or more was added to the nave. This was the case at Wakefield.

When the tower was added, men seem to have thought the nave rather dark; for here, and in a great number of other places, the next work was the addition of a clerestory to the nave. We find clerestories of all dates; but as they generally came after the towers, they are not common in parish churches before the fifteenth century.

The addition of the clerestory was, at Wakefield, the beginning of a series of works quite as extensive as those which had taken place in the fourteenth century. The chancel was rebuilt from the ground, with aisles to its whole length. These aisles were the full width of the projection of the original transepts, which thus disappear from the plan, although a tradition of them remained in the arrangement of the windows, until the aisle walls were again rebuilt in the eighteenth century, and the bays spaced equally.

After the chancel, the aisles of the nave were rebuilt, their walls being also brought out to the face of the transepts; and this completed a transformation of the church as complete as that which had preceded the reconsecration in 1329. And from the aisleless, cross church, with a central tower, which it was in

the twelfth century, it had changed, step by step, until at the end of the fifteenth it had become a large, broad church, with aisles along its whole length, a tower and spire at the west end, and not a trace of the cross form remaining. Of the original church nothing now remains but part of a winding stair, once at the south-west corner of the south transept. It is now concealed by modern work, but I saw it fifteen years ago when it was exposed. Of the twelfth century addition we have the bases and part of the shafts of some of the pillars on the north side of nave. Of the thirteenth century aisle we have the bases and shafts of the pillars, now forming the lower halves of the pillars on the south side of the nave. Of the great fourteenth century rebuilding there remain the nave arcades, except the earlier parts of them just mentioned, and also the chancel arch. All the rest—that is, all which gives its present form to the building—is later. The history of this church is, as I have said, that of hundreds of others; and there is one farther change, common in town churches, which was not made here. It is the removal of the chancel arch, and the carrying the roof uniformly and without break from one end to the other.

The later history of our old parish churches deals

more with their furniture than their fabrics, which remained for three centuries without alteration, except in matters of detail. We will therefore, before going further, take a rapid survey of the history of church fittings. The early churches of the Celtic type were not arranged for sermons or for choral services. When they were built, and long afterwards, sermons were generally preached out-of-doors. And choral services belonged to abbeys and cathedrals, and such other places as had a staff sufficient to keep them up. The idea that every decent parish church must have a choir of laymen attached to it is only the growth of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The early parish churches were built for Mass—that is, for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The presbyteries, or chancels, if we may call them so, were only large enough to receive the altar, with the priests and ministers officiating at it. At first these churches had probably no fixed furniture except the single altar. The font was an early addition. But even so late as the twelfth century there was nothing else, except that the altars had now become three, the minor ones being in the transepts in cross churches, and on each side of the chancel arch in others. We find a few screens in the next century, and some churches had pews. But it

was the prosperity of the middle classes in the fourteenth, and especially in the fifteenth century. that wrought the greatest improvements in parish churches. The feudal aristocracy interested themselves chiefly in the monasteries and collegiate foundations, each of which recognised some one family as its patron. But the interests of the people at large were in their parish churches, and as they increased in prosperity, so did their churches in splendour. The custom of founding chantries contributed much to this. Chantries were of various sorts. A chantry is generally understood to mean a foundation for the maintenance of certain services for the good of the soul of the founder and his family. But sometimes a chantry was founded, as we should now say, *by subscription*, simply to provide a living for an additional priest in places where the population required his services. The *Morrow Muss Priest*, whom we often find named in old accounts, was a *canturist* of this kind. The returns of the chantries at their suppression show that the date and occasion of their foundation had often been forgotten. They were benefices, and their incumbents were presented by the patrons and admitted by the bishops, just as the rectors and vicars were. It was not easy to found a perpetual chantry, as its endowment required a

license in mortmain, which it was both difficult and expensive to obtain ; but there were often two or three of them in a church. There were also a much larger number of temporary chantries endowed for periods varying from one to twenty years, the holders of which were, so long as their engagements lasted, held to the same duties as those of the perpetual chantries. Many guilds, too, maintained chaplains in their parish churches. And as all these priests worked to a certain extent under the rector or vicar, and were bound to assist at the principal public services, many town churches had attached to them a body of as many as twelve or even twenty priests. Such churches became practically collegiate ; indeed, sometimes a dwelling was provided, in which the cantarists lived together, as a sort of college.

The effect of all this on the fabric of the church was very considerable. The increase in the number of clergy led to a corresponding increase in that of the altars at which they officiated. And the founders of chantries often added chapels in which to place them. It also led to the use of choral services in parish churches, and their chancels were furnished in imitation of the choirs of the monastic and collegiate churches. Thence came the choir stalls and the central lectern ; thence also the rood loft,

which is an adaptation, as close as the differing conditions would permit, of the *pulpitum* of a choir. The rood loft was a music gallery, and was used for singing certain parts of the service from, as the *pulpitum* was. It was also used for pricksong, or singing in parts, which was not generally done in the chancel. All the clergy were expected to take their share in the plain song of the ordinary services. But on feast days the churchwardens would sometimes hire a company of minstrels, vocal and instrumental, and their place was in the rood loft.

Churches which could not maintain regular choral services might have them occasionally. There were funeral services, for instance,—not only those at the time of burial, but commemorative services afterwards, as the month's mind, one month after death, and the anniversary or year's mind, at the end of a year. At such times it was customary to pay fees to any men or boys who came with their surplices and took part in the services. Indeed there seems to have existed a class of vagabond clerks who made their living by attending such services. Chantry chapels are the earliest form of family pews in parish churches. When a family built or appropriated part of a church for the purpose of a chantry, it was common to enclose it with screens, and fit up the en-

closure with respect both to the chantry services at its own altar and to the public services in the chancel, during which they were occupied as pews. The squints in the direction of the high altar which are often to be seen in old churches were made for the convenience of the occupants of these "closets," as they were called. Their use as pews survived the suppression of the chantries, and has sometimes continued even to the present day. They are placed in all sorts of positions, but generally somewhere near the chancel. Recent "restorations" have unfortunately destroyed a good many.

The sermon was not a usual accompaniment to the services before the sixteenth century, but many had pulpits from the fifteenth. In 1547 they were ordered to be provided where they did not before exist.

I have already spoken of guilds as sometimes maintaining chaplains: that was but one of their many links with the church. A guild was said to be founded at some spot in the church, before an altar, or an image, or perhaps the great rood, and even the poorest of them would keep a light burning there continually as a sort of symbol of their corporate existence. They would often, too, undertake the repair, or rebuilding, or adornment of some particular part of the church, and where the "restorer" has spared

them we may sometimes find their traces even now. At St. Neot in Cornwall, for example, is a series of painted windows, with inscriptions which tell that they were given—one by the young men, one by the married men, one by the girls, and so on. These are the work of guilds or confraternities of the classes named, and when we read that they gave a thing we must not conclude that they always paid for it out of their own pockets. They would sometimes undertake work beyond their own means, and raise money for it by means of a popular entertainment, or *Ale*, as they called it, just as in our time people in like case will get up a fancy bazaar. Such *Ales* were an important part of the social life of our ancestors. Many parishes had a supply of vessels for use at them, which they kept in the *Church house*, a building provided for the secular and festive business of the parish. I have seen a great copper cauldron in Frensham Church, Surrey, once used for the brewing, which formed an important part of the preparation for an Ale. Its use is forgotten now, and they tell an absurd tale of witchcraft to explain its presence in the church. Ales were kept up in some places as late as the last century. The country May games were one form of them.

The Reformation did not produce much visible

change in parish churches until the reign of Edward VI. The courtiers of Henry VIII.'s time had enriched themselves by the plunder of the abbeys; and the extraordinary set of adventurers who got the government of the country into their hands in the days of his son tried to wring all they could from the secular churches. I need not now repeat the tale of havoc. It is enough that our churches have nothing but scars to tell of this period. It takes longer to replace than it does to destroy, and the reign of Mary was too short for much to be done; and it was not until about 1620 that the Church had sufficiently recovered the shock of the Reformation to turn attention again to the improvement of the fabrics. Between that time and the beginning of the civil wars a great deal was done. It is curious work, marked with the style of its age, but with a great deal of the mediæval tradition remaining in it. There are a few whole churches of this date, as St. John's, Leeds, for example; and altars and screens, and more especially pulpits, were very common till they were "restored" away within our own time. Even now there remain some, and it is for us to protect them and prevent further destruction as far as we can, for they belong to a most interesting period of the Church.

The time of the civil wars was again more fruitful in destruction than in production. But we have some interesting work of the Restoration date, especially in the north of England, where fonts of this time are common, and often very good of their kind ; and about Durham we find chancel screens and other furniture imitating the work of the fifteenth century, but set up in the time of Bishop Cosin.

The sermon went on increasing in importance through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Galleries were set up to increase the number of the audience, and high pews to make them comfortable. Everything was made to centre on the pulpit, and the church was transformed from a place of worship to a mere place of preaching. This movement went on together with a corresponding degradation of the work used until it was first checked and then reversed by the Church revival of our own time. After the middle of the eighteenth century there was not much done which is of any value or interest, but the lowest depth was not reached till about a hundred years later.

When new churches were built in these late times they were of course built in accordance with the ideas of their respective dates, which they exhibit more plainly than could be done by the mere alter-

ation of older buildings. The few new churches built in the first half of the seventeenth century are of mediæval type and Gothic architecture, and we find remains of both even in the London churches rebuilt after the great fire. That period was, however, the beginning of a new state of things, for then did the Italian style of architecture come into general use for church work, and the first steps were made in the direction which ultimately led to the preaching house of Georgian times, with its central pulpit and galleries all round the walls.

Quite modern churches may be passed over with the remark that, whatever be their faults, they are certainly better than those of fifty years ago, and there is reasonable hope of further improvement. But the movement which has produced this result has affected old churches in a way about which I would say a few words in conclusion. The men who have studied old churches, and imitated them in new ones, have gone on to set the old churches themselves in order, and have invented what they call "restoration," which they tell us is the putting of a church back into its original state. Their theory is that each building belongs to some one period, and their practice has been too often to destroy everything which is not of that chosen date, and to

set up modern work which they think may be mistaken for it. Now, what can be more absurd than to talk of the "period" of a building which men have used and altered according to their wants and tastes, for, it may be, a thousand years? And what can be more barbarous than the deliberate destruction of its record? Your old church belongs not to one date, but to all dates, from the first coming of Christianity into that parish down to the present time; and every stone of it has a tale to tell if you will listen to it. It is a living thing, and the contemporary of thirty generations, many of which have left us no memory of themselves except what it can reveal. What, then, shall we say of the murdering "restorer" who comes and sweeps all this away, and gives us, in its place, his fancy model of what the church may once before have been,—a *new* church, in fact, which may have merit of its own, and may, perhaps, as centuries go on, develope a new history of its own, but which, if it retain anything at all of its past, has it only in the form of scraps so blurred and defaced, and mixed up with modern forgeries, that they cannot be understood?

If "restoration" as it has been preached and practised for the last thirty years is to be condemned, it does not follow that old churches are to be left

just as they are. That is the proper thing to do with monuments whose life is past. But churches which still live must continue to do so. The present generation have as much share in them as any of the past, and has the same right as they to alter them according to their wants. But in doing so let them be careful not to take away their past, and not to make their own work pretend to be anything else than it is. There is much in the churches which may with advantage be removed, as, for instance, the shabby, deal, tank-shaped pews of fifty years ago, and a lot of modern stuff which is called Gothic. But before doing anything let men search out the history of the building, and learn how it came to be what it is; not merely, like the "restorers," by giving dates to the mouldings, but by tracing out each successive change, and the causes which led to it. When men have properly learned this lesson they will not willingly become destroyers. It is one of the objects of the Society which has arranged this series of lectures to help men to the understanding of the buildings in their charge; and if they will apply to it before undertaking any work on them, they will be sure to receive interesting information and sound advice. It is for all who value the record of our old churches to work together for their pre-

servation. The “restorers” have destroyed much, but something is left; and, as in the old story of the Sibylline books, it is of the same value as the whole, —not because what is gone is worthless, but because what remains is priceless.

LECTURE V.

BY WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE HISTORY OF PATTERN DESIGNING.

To give anything like a history of the art of pattern-designing would be impossible within the limits of one Lecture, for it would be doing no less than attempting to tell the whole story of architectural or popular art, a vast and most important subject. All I can pretend to do at present is to call your attention to certain things I have noticed in studying the development of the art of pattern-designing from ancient times to modern, and to hint at certain principles that have seemed to me to lie at the bottom of the practice of that art, and certain tendencies which its long course has had. Even in doing this I know I shall have to touch on difficult matters and take some facts for granted that may be, and have been, much disputed over; and I must, therefore,—even treating the subject thus,—claim your indulgence for a necessary curtness and incompleteness.

I have just used the word *modern*; so, to clear the

ground for what follows, I will say that by modern art I do not mean the art of the Victorian era. I need not speak of the art of our own day, because, on the one hand, whatever there is of it that is worth considering is eclectic, and is not bound by the chain of tradition to anything that has gone before us ; and, on the other hand, whatever of art is left which is in any sense the result of continuous tradition is, and long has been, so degraded as to have lost any claim to be considered as art at all. The present century has no school of art but such as each man of talent or genius makes for himself to serve his craving for the expression of his thought while he is alive, and to perish with his death. The two preceding centuries had indeed styles, which dominated the practice of art, and allowed it to spread more or less widely over the civilised world ; but those styles were not alive and progressive, in spite of the feeling of self-sufficiency with which they were looked on by the artists of those days. When the great masters of the Renaissance were gone, they, who stung by the desire of doing something new, turned their mighty hands to the work of destroying the last remains of living popular art, putting in its place for a while the results of their own wonderful individuality—when these great men were dead, and lesser men of the

ordinary type were masquerading in their garments, then at last it was seen what the so-called new birth really was ; then we could see that it was the fever of the strong man yearning to accomplish something before his death, not the simple hope of the child, who has long years of life and growth before him.

Now the art, whose sickness this feverish energy marked, is the art which I should call modern art. Its very first roots were spreading when the Roman Empire was tending towards disruption ; its last heavily fruited branches were aloft in air when feudal Europe first felt shaken by the coming storm of revolution in Church and State, and the crown of the new Holy Roman Empire was on the eve of changing from gold to tinsel.

Three great buildings mark its first feeble beginning, its vigorous early life, its last hiding away beneath the rubbish heaps of pedantry and hopelessness. I venture to call those three buildings in their present state, the first the strangest, the second the most beautiful, the third the ugliest of the buildings raised in Europe before the nineteenth century.

The first of these is the Palace of Diocletian at Spalato ; the second, the Church of St. Sophia at Constantinople ; the third, the Church of St. Peter at Rome.

At Spalato the movement of new life was first felt. There is much about the building that is downright ugly, still more that is but a mass of worn-out tradition; but there first, as far as we know, is visible the attempt to throw off the swathings of ill-understood Greek art, with which Roman architecture had encumbered itself, and to make that architecture reasonable, and consistent with the living principles of art.

But at Spalato, though the art was trying to be alive, it was scarcely alive, and what life is in it is shown in its construction only, and not in its ornamentation. Our second building, St. Sophia, early as it is in the history of the art, has utterly thrown aside all pedantic encumbrances, and is most vigorously alive. It has gathered to itself all those elements of change, which, having been kept apart for so long, were at last mingling and seething, and bringing about so many changes—so much of death and life. It is not bound by the past, but it has garnered all that there was in it which was fit to live and produce fresh life; it is the living child and the fruitful mother of art, past and future. That, even more than the loveliness which it drew forth from its own present, is what makes it the crown of all the great buildings of the world.

The new-born art was long in coming to this. Spalato was built about 313 A.D., St. Sophia in 530. More than 200 years are between them, by no means fertile of beautiful or remarkable buildings; but St. Sophia once built, the earth began to blossom with beautiful buildings, and the thousand years that lie between the date of St. Sophia and the date of St. Peter at Rome may well be called the building age of the world. But when those years were over, in Italy at least, the change was fully come; and, as a symbol of that change, there stood on the site of the great mass of history and art, which was once called the Basilica of St. Peter, that new Church of St. Peter which still curses the mightiest city of the world—the very type, it seems to me, of pride and tyranny, of all that crushes out the love of art in simple people, and makes art a toy of little estimation for the idle hours of the rich and cultivated.

Between that time and this, art has been shut up in prison; all I can say of it in that condition is that I hope it has not died there. We can draw no lesson from its prison days save a spurring on to whatsoever of hope and indignant agitation for its release we may each of us be capable of. As an epoch of art it can teach us nothing; so the nearest possible period to our own days must stand for modern art—and to my

mind that is the period between the days of the Emperor Justinian and the Emperor Charles V.; while we must call ancient art all the long period from the beginning of things to the time of Justinian and St. Sophia of Constantinople.

And now I will set about my business of noting certain things which have happened to the very subordinate art of pattern-designing in its various changes, from those earliest days till the time when it was landed amidst that rich and varied time of modern art afore-mentioned.

Let us consider what place it held among the ancient peoples—classical and barbarian; you will understand what I mean by those words without pressing home their literal meanings.

Broadly speaking, one may say that the use of this subordinate, but by no means unimportant, art is to enliven with beauty and incident what would otherwise be a blank space, wheresoever or whatsoever it may be. The absolute necessities of the art are beauty of colour and restfulness of form. More definite qualities than these it need not have. Its colour may be brought about by the simplest combinations; its form may be merely that of abstract lines or spaces, and need not of necessity have any distinct meaning, or tell any story expressible in

words. On the other hand, it is necessary to the purity of the art that its form and colour, when these bear any relation to the facts of nature (as for the more part they do), should be *suggestive* of such facts, and not *descriptive* of them.

Now all the art of the ancient historical world is in a way one, and has similar and sympathetic thoughts to express. I mean that there is a much wider gulf between the ideas of that part of ancient art which comes nearest in thought to modern, than there is between any two parts of ancient art that are furthest from one another. Nevertheless there are wide differences between the art of the different races of the ancient world. Ancient art, in fact, falls naturally into two divisions; the first is archaic, in style at least, if not always in date. It is mostly priestly and symbolic; lacking, willingly or not, the power of expressing natural facts definitely and accurately. It is mystic, wild, and elevated in its spiritual part—its soul; limited, incomplete, often grotesque in its form—its bodily part.

The other ancient art is only priestly and symbolic accidentally, and not essentially. I mean that, since this priestly symbolism clung to it, it did not take the trouble to cast it off, but used it and expressed it; but would as willingly and easily have expressed

purely intellectual or moral ideas. Furthermore, it is an art of perfection; it has perfectly attained the power of expressing what thoughts it allows itself, and will never forego any whit of that power, or tolerate any weakness or shortcoming in it. Whatever its soul may be, its body at least it will not have incomplete.

Of the first of these arts, ancient Egypt is the representative—of the second, classical Greece; and we must admit that in each of these systems the art of mere pattern-designing takes but an unimportant place. In Egyptian art, and the school which it represents, the picture-work itself was so limited by rule, so entirely suggestive only, that a certain canon of proportion having been once invented and established, it was easy and effortless work for a people who were full of feeling for quiet beauty; and, moreover, suggestion, not imitation, being the end aimed at, the picture-work easily, and without straining, fulfilled any office of decoration it was put to; so that the story which was necessary to be told on religious or public grounds became the very ornament, which merely as a matter of pleasant colour and line the eye would most desire. In more modern and less forbearing art the pictured wall is apt to become a window through which a man quietly at work or

resting looks on some great tragedy, some sad memory of the past, or terrible threat for the future. The constant companionship of such deeply emotional representations are too apt to trouble us at first, and at last to make us callous, because they are always claiming our attention, whether we are in a mood to be stirred by them or not. But in the older and more suggestive art the great subjects symbolised rather than represented by its pictures, only reached the mind through the eye when the mind was awake and ready to receive them. The wall was a wall still, and not a window; nay, a book rather, where, if you would, you might read the stories of the gods and heroes, and whose characters, whether you read them or not, delighted you always with the beauty of their form and colour.

Moreover, the expression of these great things being so well understood and so limited, it was not above the powers of execution of numbers of average workmen, and there was no danger of the holy and elevating subjects being treated absurdly or stupidly, so as to wound the feelings of serious men.

For all these reasons there is in the archaic or suggestive art of the ancients scarce any place for the elaborate pattern-designing which in later times men were driven more or less to put in the place of

picture-work, now become more liable to ridiculous and ignoble failure, more exciting to the emotions, less restful and therefore less beautiful than it had been.

On the other hand, in the perfect art of Greece the tendency was so decidedly towards fact of all kinds, that it could only give a very low place to ornament that had not a quite definite meaning; and its demand for perfection in quality of workmanship deprived effort of all hope of reward in this lower region of art, and crushed all experiment, all invention and imagination. In short, this perfect art preferred blankness to the richness that might be given by the work of an unrefined or imperfectly taught hand, whatever suggestions of beauty or thought might be in it; therefore, as in the art of Egypt, picture-work was not thought too good to fill the place of the elaborate pattern-work we are thinking of, so in that of Greece mere emptiness was good enough for the purpose; so that in both cases there was no room for finished and complete pattern-designing; nor was there in any of the schools of ancient art—all of which, as aforesaid, tended either to the Greek or the Egyptian way of looking at things.

So you see we are met by this difficulty in the outset, that wishing to see whence our art of pattern-

designing has been developed in the ancient world, we find but little of any importance that looks like the seed of it.

However, let us look at the matter a little closer, beginning with the art of Egypt. If it had no place for the elaborate and imaginative pattern-designs of modern art, at any rate it by no means loved blank spaces. Apart from the histories, and the picture-writing which so often cover walls, pillars, and all, even smaller things,—kings' robes, musical instruments, ship-sails, and the like,—are striped and diapered with variety enough and with abundant fancy, invention, and delicacy. Many of these patterns are familiar to modern art; but to what extent they owe their presence there to the influence of Egypt I do not know, but rather suppose that they are the result of men's invention taking the same path in diverse times and places, and not of direct transmission; and this all the more as I cannot see that Greek pattern-designs follow the Egyptian work closely. One thing certainly strikes one about many of these early designs of Egypt which does connect them with what follows, and that is that they seem distinctly not only Eastern, but even African. Take as an indication of this their love for stripes and chequers, that look as if they were borrowed from the mat-

maker's craft, and compare them with the work of African tribes and people, so late as up to our own time.

The Egyptian love of colour also is of the East, and their boldness in the use of it, and the ease and success with which they put one bright tint beside another without shading or gradation. On this point it is interesting to note that whatever wilful shortcomings clung to ancient Egypt in its dealings with the higher forms of art, its skill in all handicrafts was a wonder and a lesson to the ancient world. 1400 years before Christ they understood perfectly what may fairly be called the mysteries of figure-weaving and dyeing,—even the more abstruse part of the last craft, which is now represented by chintz-printing; they were skilled in glass-making and pottery, not merely in the always early-acquired art of making a vessel that shall hold water, but in that of earthenware glazed with an opaque glaze variously coloured and figured; and lastly, they were as skilful joiners and cabinetmakers as their successors of modern Egypt, who are (or were) so clever in making the most of the little scraps of wood which an untimbered country affords them.

With all this, and strange as it may seem, I cannot see that this wonderful art which lasted so

many hundred years, which had reached its blossoming time 1400 years before Christ, and was still in use in the second century after, has had much direct or lasting influence on the modern pattern-designer's art. Doubtless these flowers here look as if they might have been the prototypes of many that were drawn in the fourteenth century of our era ; but you must remember that, though they are conventional and stiffly drawn, they are parts of a picture, and stand for the assertion that flowers grew in such and such a place. They are not used in mere fancy and sportiveness—which condition of art indeed, as I said before, will be found to be common to all these primitive archaic styles. Scarce anything is drawn which is not meant to tell a definite story ; so that many of the members of the elaborate Egyptian diapers are symbols of the mysteries of nature and religion ; as, for example, the lotus, the scarab, the winged orb, the hooded and winged serpent.

I suppose that there is no doubt that the gigantic and awful temples of Egypt are the earliest columnar buildings of which the world knows ; nevertheless, I cannot think that the columnar Greek temple was derived from them, whatever of detail the Greeks borrowed frankly and obviously from them. The enormous and terrible scale on which they are

designed, and especially the battering in of walls and door-jambs, which adds such gloom to these primeval buildings, surely shows that one at least, and that the most venerated, of the types of the Egyptian temple was a cave, and that their pillars are the masses left to support the huge weight of the hillside; while, on the other hand, it is not easy to doubt that timber-building was the origin of the Greek temple. The Greek pillar was a wooden post, its lintel a timber beam, and the whole building a holy memory of the earlier days of the race and the little wooden hall that housed the great men and gods of the tribe.

Nevertheless, the two forms of Capital which have gone round the world,—the cushion or lotus-bud form, and the bell-shaped or open-lily form—are certainly the forms of Egyptian Capitals, nor has any other radical form been invented in architecture, or perhaps can be. Whether these have been taken consciously or unconsciously from the first finished art of the world who can affirm or deny?

Now before we venture to insult the aristocratically perfect art of Periclean Greece by making an important matter of what it despised, and trying to connect the work of its hewers of wood and drawers

of water with the crafts of modern Europe, let us look a little into the art of another river-valley; the land between Tigris and Euphrates. This art is important enough to our immediate subject, quite apart from the wonderful historical interest of the great empires that ruled there; but there are left no such riches of antiquity to help us as in Egypt. Of Babylon, who was the mother of the arts of those regions, there is but little left, and that little not of the art in which she most excelled. What is left joined to the derived art of Assyria, which is almost all that represents the earlier Babylonian art, seems to show us that if more yet had survived we might be nearer to solving the question of the origin of a great part of our pattern-designs; and this all the more as colour was an essential of its master art. The Babylonians built in brick (sunburnt much of it), and ornamented their wall-spaces with painted pottery, which (taking the whole story into consideration) must surely have been the source from which flowed all the art of pottery of Persia, and the kindred or neighbour lands of the East. From the very nature of this art, there are but a few scraps of it left, as I have said, and Assyrian art must fill the gap for us as well as it can. The great slabs of alabaster with which that people decorated the palaces raised on

their mounds of sunburnt bricks,—these things with which we are so familiar, that we are almost likely to forget the wonder that lies in them,—tell us without a doubt what the type of Mesopotamian art was. It had started, like that of Egypt, from the archaic and priestly idea of art; but, in Assyrian days at least, had grown less venerable and more realistic, less beautiful also, and, if one may say so, possessed by a certain truculence both of form and spirit, which expresses well enough the ceaseless violence and robbery which is all that we have recorded of the history of Assyria. Its pattern-designing takes a lower place than that of Egypt, as far as we can judge in the absence or decay of what colour it once had. Its system of colour—one must needs judge from the fragments remaining—showed no great love for that side of the art, and was used rather to help the realism to which it tended, and which, had it lived longer, would most likely have driven it out of the path of monumental and decorative art. Nevertheless, by strange accidents in the course of history, there are some of the forms of its decoration that have been carried forward into the general mass of civilised art. A great part of its patterns, indeed, were diapers or powderings, like much of Egyptian work, only carried out in a bossy, rounded kind of relief, characteristic

enough of its general tendencies. These minor and natural forms died out with the Assyrian monarchy ; but several of its borderings were borrowed by the Greeks, through the Asiatic traders doubtless, who, on their own wares, seem to have used both Egyptian and Chaldæan mythological figures without understanding their meaning, simply because they made pretty ornaments for a bowl or a vase.

As an example of these running patterns, take the interlacement which we now nickname the guilloche, or the ornament called the honeysuckle, which I rather suppose to be a suggestion of a tuft of flowers and leaves breaking through the earth, and which learned men think had a mystical meaning beyond that simple idea, like that other bordering, which, for want of a better word, I must call the flower and pine-cone.

There is another mystical ornament which we first come upon in Assyrian art, which we shall have to come to again, but which I must mention here, and which has played a strangely important part in the history of pattern-designing—this is the Holy Tree with its attendant guardian angels or demons. Almost all original styles have used this form,—some, doubtless, as a religious symbol, most driven by vague tradition and allured by its convenience as a decor-

ative form. I should call it the most important and widely spread piece of ornament ever invented.

Again, before we affront the majesty of Pallas Athene by looking curiously at her sleeve-hem, rather than reverently at herself, I must say a word about the conquerors of Assyria, the Persians.

To us pattern-designers, Persia has become a holy land, for there in the process of time our art was perfected, and thence above all places it spread to cover for a while the world, east and west. But in the hierarchy of ancient art the place of Persia is not high ; its sculpture was borrowed directly from Assyrian and Babylonian art, and has not the life and vigour of its prototype ; though some gain it has of architectural dignity, which the Aryan stock of the Persians accounts for I think. Still more is this shown in the leap the Persians took in architecture proper. The palaces of the Assyrian kings do not know, or do not use the column ; they are one and all a congeries of not very large chambers connected by doors very oddly placed. How they were roofed we can no longer tell ; probably the smaller chambers had some kind of dome for a roof, and the larger no roof, only a sort of ledge projecting from the wall. The palace of the ancient Persians, on the other hand, was fairly

made up of columns ; the walls could not have been of much importance ; the whole thing is as a forest of pillars that upholds the canopy over the summer-seat of the great king.

For the rest, though this is the work of an Aryan race, that race had far to go and much to suffer before they could attain to the measured, grave, and orderly beauty which they alone of all races have learned to create,—before they could attain to the divine art of reasonable architecture. The majesty of the ancient Persian columnar building is marred by extravagance and grotesquery of detail, which must be called ugliness; faults which it shares with the ancient architecture of India,—of the earlier form of which it must have been an offshoot.

We have thus touched, lightly enough, on the principal styles of the archaic type of art ; and have seen that our craft of pattern-designing was developed but slowly among them, and that, with few exceptions, its forms did not travel very far on the road of history. We are now come to that period of perfection which, as it were, draws a bar of light across the history of art, and is apt to dazzle us and blind us to all that lies on either side of it. As we pass from the Egyptian and Assyrian rooms at the British Museum and

come upon the great groups of the Parthenon, full as we may be of admiration for the nobility of the Egyptian monuments, and the eager and struggling realism of Assyria, how our wonder rises as we look on the perfection of sculpture, cut off as it seems by an impassable gulf from all that has gone before it,—the hopeless limitations, or the hopeless eudeavours of the great mass of mankind ! Nor can we help asking ourselves the question if art can go any further, or what there is to do after such work ?

Indeed the question is a hard one, and aftertimes of art, and even many cultivated people of to-day, may be blamed but lightly if they, in their helplessness, must needs answer : “there is nothing to do but to imitate, and again to imitate, and to pick up what style the gods may give us amidst our imitation, even if we are driven to imitate the imitators.”

And yet, I must ask you above all things to join me in thinking that the question must be answered in quite a different way to this, unless we are to be for ever the barbarians which the Athenians of the time of Pericles would certainly, and not so wrongly, have called us ; for to me these works of perfection do not express everything which the archaic work suggested, and which they might have expressed if they had dared to try it : still less do they express all that

the later work strove to express,—often maybe with halting skill, seldom without some vision of the essence of things,—which would have been lost to us for ever had they waited for the day, never to come, when the hand of man shall be equal to his thought, and no skill be lacking him to tell us of the height and depth of his aspirations.

No, even these men of Ancient Greece had their limitations, nor was it altogether better with them than it is with us ; the freedom of these free people was a narrow freedom. True they lived a simple life, and did not know of that great curse and bane of art which we call luxury—yet was their society founded on slavery ; slavery, mental as well as bodily, of the greater part of mankind, the iron exclusiveness which first bound their society, after no long while unsettled it, and at last destroyed it.

When we think of all that classical art represents, and all that it hides and buries, of its pretensions and its shortcomings, surely we shall not accuse the fates too loudly of blindness for overthrowing it, or think that the confusion and misery of the times that followed it was too great a price to pay for fresh life and its token, change of the forms of art which express men's thoughts.

Now if you should think I have got on to matters

over serious for our small subject of pattern-designing, I will say, first, that even these lesser arts, being produced by man's intelligence, cannot really be separated from the greater, the more purely intellectual ones, or from the life which creates both ; and next, that to my mind the tokens of the incompleteness of freedom among the classical peoples, and their aristocratic and rigid exclusiveness, are as obvious in one side of their art, as their glorious simplicity of life and respect for individuality of mind among the favoured few are obvious in the other side of it ; and it is in our subject matter of to-day that their worser part shows.

The pattern-designs of Greek art under a system which forbade any meddling with figure-work by men who could not draw the human figure unexceptionably, must have been the main resource of their lower artists (what we call artisans) ; they are generally, though not always, thoroughly well fitted for the purpose of decoration which they are meant to serve, but neither are, nor pretend to be, of any interest in themselves ; they are graceful, indeed, where the Assyrian ones are clumsy, temperate where those of Egypt are over-florid ; but they have not, and do not pretend to have, any share of the richness, the mastery, or the individuality of nature, as

much of the ornament of the earlier periods, and most of that of the later have had. I must ask you not to misunderstand me, and suppose that I think lightly of the necessity for the due and even severe subordination of architectural ornament; what I do want you to understand is, that the constant demand which Greek art made for perfection on every side was not an unmixed gain to it, for it made renunciation of many delightful things a necessity, and not unseldom drove it into being hard and unsympathetic. Of the system of Greek colour we can know very little, from the scanty remains that are left us. I think they painted much of their carving and sculpture in a way that would rather frighten our good taste—to hear of, I mean, though probably not to see. Some people, on the other hand, have supposed that they were all but colour-blind, a guess that we need not discuss at great length. What is to be said of it is, that certain words which to us express definite tints of colour, are used in their literature, and that of Rome which imitated it, in such a way as to show that they noticed the difference between tones of colours more than that between tints. For the rest, it would be unreasonable to suppose that a people who despised the lesser arts, and who were on the look-out, first for scientific and historic facts, and next for beauty of form,

should give themselves up to indulgence in the refinements of colour. The two conditions of mind are incompatible.

As to what the development of pattern-designs owes to Greek art, all that side of the craft which, coming directly and consciously from classical civilisation, has helped to form the ornament of modern architecture, has, whoever invented the patterns, originally passed through the severe school of Greece, and thus been transmitted to us.

Of all these ornamental forms the most important is that we choose to call the Acanthus leaf, which was borne forward with the complete development of the column and capital. As I have said before, the form of the timber hall, with its low-pitched roof, its posts and beams, had got to be considered a holy form by the Greeks, and they did not care to carry dignified architecture further, or invent any more elaborate form of construction; but the prodigious care they took in refining the column with its cushion, or horned, or bell-shaped capital, impressed those forms on the world for ever, and especially the last of these, the bell-shaped one, whose special ornament was this glittering leafage we now call Acanthus. No form of ornament has gone so far, or lasted so long as this; it has been infinitely varied,

used by almost all following styles in one shape or another, and performed many another office besides its original one.

Now this question of the transmission of the forms of Greek architecture leads us at once to thinking of that of Rome, since it was by this road that all of it went, which was consciously accepted as a gift of the classical times. The subject of the origin of all that is characteristic in Roman art is obscure enough, much too obscure for my little knowledge even to attempt to see into it; nay, even in speaking of it, I had better call it the art of the peoples collected under the Roman name; so that I may be understood to include all the influences that went to its creation.

Now if we are asked what impression the gathered art of these peoples made upon modern art, I see nothing for it but to say that it invented architecture—no less. Before their time, indeed, temples took such and such forms among diverse nations, and such and such ornament grew on them; but what else was done with these styles we really do not know; a frivolous pleasure-town built in a late period, and situate in Italy,—which destruction, so to say, has preserved for us,—being the only token left

to show what a Greek house might perhaps have been like. For the rest, in spite of all the wonders of Greek sculpture, we must needs think that the Greeks had done little to fix the future architecture of the world: there was no elasticity or power of growth about the style; right in its own country, used for the worship and aspirations which first gave it birth, it could not be used for anything else. But with the architecture of the men of the Roman name it was quite different. In the first place, they seized on the great invention of the arch, the most important invention to house-needing men that has been, or can be made. They did not invent it themselves of course, since it was known in Ancient Egypt, and apparently not uncommon in brick-building Babylonia; but they were the first who used it otherwise than as an ugly necessity, and, in so using it, they settled what the architecture of civilisation must henceforward be. Nor was their architecture, stately as it was, any longer fit for nothing but a temple,—a holy railing for the shrine or symbol of the god; it was fit for one purpose as for another—church, house, aqueduct, market-place, or castle; nor was it the style of one country or one climate, it would fit itself to north or south, snow-storm or sand-storm alike. Though pedants might make inflexible rules for its

practice when it was dead or dying, when it was alive it did not bind itself too strictly to rule, but followed, in its constructive part at least, the law of nature ; in short, it was a new art,—the great art of civilisation.

True it is that what we have been saying of it applies to it as a style of building chiefly ; in matters of ornament the arts of the conquered did completely take the conqueror captive, and not till the glory of Rome was waning, and its dominion become a tax-gathering machine, did it even begin to strive to shake off the fetters of Greece ; and still, through all those centuries, the Roman lords of the world thought the little timber god's house a holy form, and necessary to be impressed on all stately architecture. It is a matter of course that the part of the architectural ornament of the Romans, which may be definitely called pattern-design, shared fully in this slavery ; it was altered and somewhat spoiled Greek work, less refined and less forbearing. Great swinging scrolls mostly formed of the Acanthus foliage, not very various or delicate in their growth, mingled with heavy rolling flowers, form the main part of the Roman pattern-design that clove to the arts. There is no mystery in them, and little interest in their growth, though they are rich and handsome ; indeed, they scarcely do *grow* at all, they are rather stuck

together ; for the real connected pattern, where one member grows naturally and necessarily out of another, —where the whole thing is alive as a real tree or flower is,—all this is an invention of what followed Roman art, and is unknown both to the classical and the ancient world. Nevertheless, this invention, when it came, clothed its soul in a body which was chiefly formed of the Greco-Roman ornament, so that this splendid Roman scroll-work though not very beautiful in itself, is the parent of very beautiful things. It is, perhaps, in the noble craft of mosaic—which is a special craft of the Roman name—that the foreshadowings of the new art is best seen. In the remains of this art you may note the growing formation of more mysterious and more connected, as well as freer and more naturalistic design ; their colour, in spite often of the limitation forced on the workman by simple materials, is skilfully arranged and beautiful ; and in short, there is a sign in them of the coming of the wave of that great change which was to turn late Roman art, the last of the old, into Byzantine art, the first of the new.

It lingered long. For long there was still some show of life in the sick art of the older world ; that art had been so powerful, so systematised, that it was not easy to get rid even of its dead body. The first stirrings of change were felt in the master-art of

architecture, or, once more, in the art of building. As I said before in speaking of the earliest building that shows this movement, the Palace at Spalato, the ornamental side of the art lagged long behind the constructional. In that building you see for the first time the arch acting freely, and without the sham support of the Greek beam-architecture ; henceforth, the five orders are but pieces of history, until the time when they were used by the new pedants of the Renaissance to enslave the world again.

Note now, that this first change of architecture marks a new world and new thoughts arising. Diocletian's palace was built but a few years before the Roman tyranny was rent in twain. When it was raised, that which men thought would last for ever, had been already smitten with its death-stroke. Let your minds go back through all the centuries to look on the years that followed, and see how the whole world is changing ; unheard of peoples thrusting on into Europe ; nation mingling with nation, and blood with blood ; the old classical exclusiveness is gone for ever. Greek, Roman, Barbarian, are words still used, but the old meaning has departed from them ; nay, even, they may mean pretty much the reverse of what they did. Dacians, Armenians, Arabs, Goths ; from these come the captains of the Roman name ; and when the

Roman army goes afield, marching now as often to defeat as victory, it may well be that no Italian goes in its ranks to meet the enemies of Rome. More wonder is it, therefore, that the forms of the old world clave so close to art, than that a new art was slowly and unobtrusively getting ready to meet the new thoughts and aspirations of mankind; that modern art was near its birth, though modern Europe was born before its art was born.

Meanwhile let us turn aside from Europe to look for a little at the new birth of an ancient nation—Persia, to wit—and see what part it took in carrying on the forms of decoration from the old world into the new.

I will ask you to remember that, after the contest between Persia and Greece had been ended by Alexander, and when his dream of a vast European-Asiatic Empire, infused throughout with Hellenic thought and life, had but brought about various knots of anarchical and self-seeking tyrannies, a new and masterful people changed the story; and Persia, with the surrounding countries, fell under the dominion of the Parthians, a people of a race whose office in the furthering of civilisation is perhaps the punishment of its crimes. The ancient Parthians, like the modern Ottomans, scarcely mingled with the nations which they conquered, but rather encamped among

them. Like the Ottomans, also, the decline of their warlike powers by no means kept pace with the decline of their powers of rule, or the steady advance of their inevitable doom. Artabanus, the last of the Parthian kings, turned from the victorious field of Nisibis, where he had overcome the men of the Roman name, to meet the rising of his Persian subjects; which, in three days of bloody battle, swept away his life and the dominion of his race. A curious lesson, by the way, to warring tyrannies. The Roman Empire had contended long with the Parthian kingdom, had wrested many a province from it, and weakened it sorely, all for this—that it might give birth to the greatest and most dangerous enemy of the Roman Empire, and one who was soon to humiliate it so grievously.

Now as to the art of these kingdoms. That of the Parthians must be set aside by treating it in the way which was used by the worthy Norwegian merchant in writing of the snakes in Iceland—there was no art among the Parthians; no native art, that is to say, and scarcely any borrowed art which they made quasi-native. In earlier times Greek hands fashioned their coins and such-like matters; in later they borrowed their art from the borrowed art of their Persian subjects, with whom, doubtless, they were often confused by classical writers.

Neither can I say that of the art of the new-born Persian kingdom there is much left that is important in itself. I have said that much of the art of Achæmenian Persia was borrowed directly from Assyria, its wild and strange columnar architecture being the only part of it that seems to bear any relation to the Aryan race. For 350 years the Persians lay under the domination of Turan, and certainly, to judge from what we know of their architecture during and after that time, they were not receptive of ideas from other branches of their race.

The most notable works of the new-born or Sassanian Kingdom of Persia are certain rock-sculptured monuments of diverse dates, the earliest being that which commemorates Sapor the Great, and his triumph over the Roman emperor Valerian, which happened A.D. 260, only forty years after Artaxerxes, the first Sassanian king, had overthrown and slain the last of the Parthians on the field of Hormuz. To my mind these sculptures still show the influence of that Assyrian or Chaldæan art, which is the first form that art took in Persia, though they are by no means lacking in original feeling, and are obviously and most interestingly careful in matters of costume—the Romans being dressed as Romans, and the Persians in their national dress; the chief difference

between which and the costume of the Achæmenian time being in the strange and, I suppose, symbolical head-dress of Sapor himself, who wears over his crown an enormous globe, seemingly made of some light material inflated.

There is no mere ornamental detail in these sculptures; but in a monument to Chosroes II., whose reign began A.D. 590, there is a good deal of it; and in this the Chaldæan influence is unmistakable, and all the more marked, since it is mingled with visible imitation of late Roman figure-sculpture as well as with inferior work of the kind found in Sapor's monument. The existence of this Chaldæan influence is all the more important to note because of its late date.

Besides these sculptured works, there are also left in Persia and Mesopotamia some remains of important Sassanian buildings, which, however scanty, are of great interest. To what earlier style is due the origin of their characteristic features it would be impossible to say; but one thing is clear to me, that some of those features at least have been fixed on modern Persian architecture; as, for example, the egg-shaped dome, and the great cavernous porch with the small doorway pierced in its inside wall, both of which features are special characteristics of

that modern Persian architecture which is in fact the art of the Mussulman world. A word must be said further on a feature of the Sassanian architecture that lies nearer to our subject—the capitals of columns still existing. The outline of these is curiously like that of fully developed Byzantine architecture; the carved ornament on them is in various degrees influenced by ancient Chaldaean art, being in some cases identical with the later Assyrian pattern-work, in others mingled with impressions of Roman ornament; but the general effect of them in any case shows a very remarkable likeness to the ruder capitals of the time of Justinian, more especially to his work at Ravenna, a fact to be carefully noted in connection with the development of that art.

Some very rich and lovely architectural carving at the palace of Mashita, wrought late in the Sassanian time, about 630, bears a strong resemblance to elaborate Byzantine work at its best—it might almost be work of Comnenian Greeks at Venice or Milan—nevertheless, and this also I beg you to remember, it is as like as possible to designs on carpets and tiles done nearly a thousand years after the battle of Cadesia, under the rule of Shah Abbas the Great.

Furthermore, I believe the Persians have preserved and handed down to later ages certain forms of orna-

ment which, above all, must be considered parts of pattern designing, and which have clung to that art with singular tenacity. These forms are variations of the mystic symbols of the Holy Tree, and the Holy Fire. The subject of the shapes these have taken, and the reasons for their use and the diversities of them, is a difficult and obscure one; so I must, before I go further, remind you that I lay no claims to mythological and ethnological learning, and if I blunder while I touch on these subjects—as I cannot help doing—I shall be very glad of correction from any one who understands this recondite subject.

However, what I have noticed of these in my studies as a pattern-designer is this. There are two symbols; the one is a tree, more or less elaborately blossomed, and supported, as heralds say, by two living creatures, genii, partly or wholly manlike, or animals, sometimes of known kinds, lions or the like, sometimes invented monsters; the other symbol is an altar with a flame upon it, supported by two living creatures, sometimes man-like, sometimes beast-like. Now these two symbols are found, one or other, or both of them, in almost all periods of art; the lion gate at Mycenæ will occur to all of you as one example. I have seen a very clear example figured, which is in a pot found in Attica, of the very earliest

period. The Holy Tree is common in Assyrian art, the Holy Fire is found in it. The Holy Fire with the attendant figures, priests in this case always, is on the coins of all the Sassanian kings; the Holy Tree, supported by lions, is found in Sassanian art also. Now it is clear that the two symbols are apt to become so much alike in rude representations, that sometimes it is hard to say whether the supporters have the tree or the fire-altar between them; and this seems to have puzzled those who used them after the Sassanian period, and when, doubtless, they had forgotten or perverted their original meaning. They are used very often in Byzantine art in carvings and the like, where again they sometimes take another form of peacocks drinking from a fountain; but, of all things, are commonest perhaps in the silken stuffs that were wrought in Greece, Syria, Egypt, and at last in Sicily and Lucca, between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries. In these, at first, it was a toss-up whether the thing between the creatures should be the altar or the tree, though the latter was always commonest; but at last the tree won the day, I imagine rather because it was prettier than for any more abstruse reason; still, even in quite late times, the fire crops up again at whiles. I should mention also, that in these later representations man-like

figures are seldom, if ever, seen ; beasts of all kinds, from giraffes to barn-door fowls, take their place.

It would be absurd of me to attempt to be authoritative as to the meaning of these far-travelling symbols ; but I may be allowed to say, perhaps, that both the fire and the tree are symbols of life and creation, and that, when the central object is obviously a fire, the supporters are either ministers of the altar or guardian spirits. As to the monsters supporting the tree, they also, I suppose, may be guardians. I have, however, seen a different guess at their meaning—to wit, that they represent the opposing powers of good and evil that form the leading idea of the dualism that fixed itself to the ancient Zoroastrian creed ; the creed in which the Light and the Fire had become the recognised symbol of deity by the time of the Sassanian monarchs. I cannot pretend to say what foundation there may be for this theory, which would fuse the two symbols into one. The only thing I feel pretty certain of is this : that whatever the forms may mean, they are never found but among peoples who, it may be at the end of a very long chain, have had some dealings with the country between the two Rivers ; that they therefore are Chaldæan in origin ; that, though they have been transmitted by other means in earlier days, it is to

the Sassanian Persians that we owe their presence in modern art.

But it is not difficult to see that such an incomplete and even languid art as that of new-born Persia, which had but little character of its own, at any rate on its ornamental side, would have had no strength to carry these strange figures so far—figures which, I repeat, have played a greater part than any others among the pattern-designs of Europe and the East, however those who used them might be unconscious of their meaning. It was on another and mightier art that they were borne. The influence of Persia, indeed, was felt amongst a people ready to receive it, in a time that was agape to take in something new to fill the void which the death of classical art had made; but other influences were at work among the people, whose mother city was New Rome, which was a kind of knot to all the many thrums of the varied life of the first days of modern Europe.

While men slept a new art was growing up in that strange empire, on whom so many centuries of change still thrust the name of Rome, although the deeds and power of Rome were gone from it. Many of you have doubtless heard this art spoken of with contempt as the mere dregs of the dying art of the

ancient world. Well, doubtless death was busy among what was left of the art of antiquity, but it was a death that bore new quickening with it; it was a corruption which was drawing to it elements of life, of which the classical world knew nothing; and the chief element of life that it gave expression to was freedom—the freedom of the many—in the realm of art at least. In the earlier days the workman had nought to do but to grind through his day's work, stick tightly to his gauge lest he be beaten or starved, and then go; but now he was rising under the load of contempt that crushed him, and could do something that people would stop to look at no less than the more intellectual work of his better-born fellow. What has come of that in later times, nay, what may yet come of it in days that we shall not live to see, we may not consider now. But one thing came of it in those earlier days—an architecture which was pure in its principles, reasonable in its practice, and beautiful to the eyes of all men, even the simplest; which is a thing, mind you, which can never exist in any state of society under which men are divided into intellectual castes.

It was a matter of course that the art of pattern designing should fully share in this exaltation of the master art. Now at last, and only now, it began to

be really delightful in itself; good reason why, since now at last the mind of a man, happy in his work, did more or less guide all hands that wrought it. No beauty in the art has ever surpassed the beauty of those, its first days of joy and freedom; the days of gain without loss—the time of boundless hope. I say of gain without loss; the qualities of all the past styles which had built it up are there, with all that it has gained of new. The great rolling curves of the Roman Acanthus have not been forgotten, but they have had life, growth, variety, and refinement infused into them; the clean-cut accuracy and justness of line of one side of Greek ornament has not been forgotten either, nor the straying wreath-like naturalism of the other side of it; but the first has gained a crisp sparkling richness, and freedom and suggestion of nature which it had lacked before; and the second, which was apt to be feeble and languid, has gained a knitting-up of its lines into strength, and an interest in every curve, which make it like the choice parts of the very growths of nature. Other gain it has of richness and mystery, the most necessary of all the qualities of pattern-work, that without which, indeed, it must be kept in the strictly subordinate place which the scientific good taste of Greece allotted to it. Where did it get those qualities from?

If the art of the East had been what it has since become, we might perhaps answer, from the East ; but this is by no means the case. On the contrary, though, as I have said or implied above, Byzantine art borrowed forms from Persia and Chaldæa at the back of her, nothing is more certain, to my mind, than that Byzantine art made Eastern art what it became ; that the art of the East has remained beautiful so long because for so many centuries, it practised the lessons which New Rome first taught it. Indeed, I think the East had much to do with the new life of this true Renaissance, but indirectly. The influence of its thought, its strange mysticism that gave birth to such wild creeds, its looking towards equality amidst all the tyranny of kings that crushed all men alike ; these things must have had then, and long before, great influence on men's thoughts at the verge of Europe and Asia.

But surely, when we have sought our utmost for the origins of all the forms of that great body of the expression of men's thoughts which I have called modern art (you may call it Gothic art if you will, little as the Goths dealt with it), when we have sought and found much, we shall still have to confess that there is no visible origin for the thing that gave life to those forms. All we can say is, that

when the Roman tyranny grew sick, when that recurring curse of the world, a dominant race, began for a time to be shaken from its hold, men began to long for the freedom of art; and that, even amidst the confusion and rudeness of a time when one civilisation was breaking up that another might be born of it, the mighty impulse which this longing gave to the expression of thought created speedily a glorious art, full of growth and hope, in the only form which in such a time art could take—architecture to wit,—which, of all the forms of art, is that which springs direct from popular impulse, from the partnership of all men, great and little, in worthy and exalting aspirations.

So was modern or Gothic art created; and never, till the time of that death or cataleptic sleep of the so-called Renaissance, did it forget its origin, or fail altogether in fulfilling its mission of turning the ancient curse of labour into something more like a blessing. As to the way in which it did its work, as I have no time, so also I have but little need to speak, since there is none of us but has seen and felt some portion of the glory which it left behind, but has shared some portion of that most kind gift it gave, the world; for even in this our turbulent island, the home of rough and homely men, so far away from the

centres of art and thought which I have been speaking of, did simple folk labour for those that should come after them. Here, in the land we yet love, they built their homes and temples ; if not so majestically as many peoples have done, yet in such sweet accord with the familiar nature amidst which they dwelt, that when by some happy chance we come across the work they wrought, untouched by any but natural change, it fills us with a satisfying untroubled happiness that few things else could bring us. Must our necessities destroy, must our restless ambition mar, the sources of this innocent pleasure, which rich and poor may share alike—this communion with the very hearts of departed men ? Must we sweep away these touching memories of our stout forefathers and their troublous days, that won our present peace and liberties ?

If our necessities compel us to it, I say we are an unhappy people ; if our vanity lure us into it, I say we are a foolish and light-minded people, who have not the wits to take a little trouble to avoid spoiling our own goods.

Our own goods ? Yes, the goods of the people of England, now and in time to come ; we who are now alive, are but life-renters of them. Any of us who pretend to any culture, know well that in destroying

or injuring one of these buildings, we are destroying the pleasure, the culture,—in a word, the humanity—of unborn generations. It is speaking very mildly to say that we have no right to do this for our temporary convenience; it is speaking too mildly. I say any such destruction is an act of brutal dishonesty. Do you think such a caution is unnecessary? how I wish that I could think so! It is a grievous thing to have to say, but say it I must, that the one most beautiful city of England, the city of Oxford, has been ravaged for many years past, not only by ignorant and interested tradesmen, but by the University and College authorities. Those whose special business it is to direct the culture of the nation have treated the beauty of Oxford as if it were a matter of no moment, as if their commercial interests might thrust it aside without any consideration. To my mind in so doing they have disgraced themselves.

For the rest, I will say it, that I think the poor remains of our ancient buildings in themselves, as memorials of history and works of art, are worth more than any temporary use they can be put to. Yes, apply it to Oxford if you please. There are many places in England where a young man may get as good book-learning as in Oxford; not one where he can receive the education which the loveliness of

the gray city used to give us. Call this sentiment if you please, but you *know* that it is true.

Before I go further let me tell you that our Society has had much to do in cases of what I should call the commercial destruction of buildings; that we have carefully examined these cases to see if we had any ground to stand on for resisting the destruction; that we have argued the matter threadbare on all sides; and that above all we have always tried to suggest some possible use that the buildings could be put to. As a branch of this subject, I must ask leave to add, at the risk of wearying you, that the Society has taken great pains (and been sometimes called rude for it, if that mattered) to try to get guardians of ancient buildings to *repair* their buildings. For we know well, by doleful experience, how quickly a building gets infirm if it be neglected. There are plenty of cases where a parish or a parson will spend two or three thousand pounds on ecclesiastical finery for a church, and let the rain sap the roof all the while; such things are apt to make the most polite people rude.

I have one last word to say on the before-mentioned restless vanity that so often mars the gift our fathers have given us. Its results have a technical name now, and are called "restoration." Don't be

afraid. I am going to say very little about it; my plea against it is very simple. I have pleaded it before, but it seems to me so unanswerable that I will do so again, even if it be in the same words. Yet first let me say this: I love art, and I love history; but it is living art and living history that I love. If we have no hope for the future, I do not see how we can look back on the past with pleasure. If we are to be less than men in time to come, let us forget that we have ever been men. It is in the interest of living art and living history that I oppose "restoration." What history can there be in a building bedaubed with ornament, which cannot at the best be anything but a hopeless and lifeless imitation of the hope and vigour of the earlier world? As to the art that is concerned in it, a strange folly it seems to me for us who live among these bricken masses of hideousness, to waste the energies of our short lives in feebly trying to add new beauty to what is already beautiful. Is that all the surgery we have for the curing of England's spreading sore? Don't let us vex ourselves to cure the antepenultimate blunders of the world, but fall to on our own blunders. Let us leave the dead alone, and, ourselves living, build for the living and those that shall live.

Meantime, my plea for our Society is this, that

since it is disputed whether restoration be good or not, and since we are confessedly living in a time when architecture has come on the one hand to Jerry building, and on the other to experimental designing (good, very good experiments some of them), let us take breath and wait; let us sedulously repair our ancient buildings, and watch every stone of them as if they were built of jewels (as indeed they are), but otherwise let the dispute rest till we have once more learned architecture, till we once more have among us a reasonable, noble, and universally used style. Then let the dispute be settled. I am not afraid of the issue. If that day ever comes, we shall know what beauty, romance, and history mean, and the technical meaning of the word "restoration" will be forgotten.

Is not this a reasonable plea? It means prudence. If the buildings are not worth anything they are not worth restoring; if they *are* worth anything, they are at least worth treating with common sense and prudence. Come now, I invite you to support the most prudent Society in all England.

LECTURE VI.

BY WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE LESSER ARTS OF LIFE.

THE Lesser Arts of Life may not seem to some of you worth considering, even for an hour. In these brisk days of the world, amidst this high civilisation of ours, we are too eager and busy, it may be said, to take note of any form of art that does not either stir our emotions deeply, or strain the attention of the most intellectual part of our minds.

Now for this rejection of the lesser arts there may be something to be said, supposing it be done in a certain way and with certain ends in view; nevertheless it seems to me that the lesser arts, when they are rejected, are so treated for no sufficient reason, and to the injury of the community; therefore I feel no shame in standing before you as a professed pleader and advocate for them, as indeed I well may, since it is through them that I am the servant of the public, and earn my living with abundant pleasure.

Then comes the question, What are to be considered the Lesser Arts of Life? I suppose there might be pros and cons argued on that question, but I doubt if the argument would be worth the time and trouble it would cost; nevertheless, I want you to agree with me in thinking that these lesser arts are really a part of the greater ones which only a man or two here and there (among cultivated people) will venture to acknowledge that he contemns, whatever the real state of the case may be on that matter. The Greater Arts of Life, what are *they*? Since people may use the word in very different senses, I will say, without pretending to give a definition, that what I mean by an art is some creation of man which appeals to his emotions and his intellect by means of his senses. All the greater arts appeal directly to that intricate combination of intuitive perceptions, feelings, experience, and memory which is called imagination. All artists, who deal with those arts, have these qualities superabundantly, and have them balanced in such exquisite order that they can use them for purposes of creation. But we must never forget that all men who are not naturally deficient, or who have not been spoiled by defective or perverse education, have imagination in some measure, and also have some of the order which

guides it; so that they also are partakers of the greater arts, and the masters of them have not to speak under their breath to half-a-dozen chosen men, but rather their due audience is the whole race of man properly and healthily developed. But as you know, the race of man, even when very moderately civilised, has a great number of wants which have to be satisfied by the organised labour of the community. From father to son, from generation to generation, has grown up a body of almost mysterious skill, which has exercised itself in making the tools for carrying on the occupation of living; so that a very large part of the audience of the masters of the greater arts have been engaged like them in making things; only the higher men were making things wholly to satisfy men's spiritual wants; the lower, things whose first intention was to satisfy their bodily wants. But though, in theory, all these could be satisfied without any expression of the imagination, any practice of art, yet history tells us what we might well have guessed would be the case, that the thing could not stop there. Men whose hands were skilled in fashioning things could not help thinking the while, and soon found out that their deft fingers could express some part of the tangle of their thoughts, and that this new pleasure

hindered not their daily work, for in their very labour that they lived by lay the material in which their thought could be embodied ; and thus though they laboured, they laboured somewhat for their pleasure and uncompelled, and had conquered the curse of toil, and were men.

Here, then, we have two kinds of art : one of them would exist even if men had no needs but such as are essentially spiritual, and only accidentally material or bodily. The other kind, called into existence by material needs, is bound no less to recognise the aspirations of the soul, and receives the impress of its striving towards perfection.

If the case be as I have represented it, even the lesser arts are well worthy the attention of reasonable men, and those who despise them must do so either out of ignorance as to what they really are, or because they themselves are in some way or other enemies of civilisation, either outlaws from it or corrupters of it.

As to the outlaws from civilisation, they are those of whom I began by saying that there are or were people who rejected the arts of life on grounds that we could at least understand, if we could not sympathise with the rejecters. There have been in all ages of civilisation men who have acted, or had

a tendency to act, on some such principle as the following words represent:—The world is full of grievous labour, the poor toiling for the rich, and ever remaining poor; with this we, at least, will have nought to do; we cannot amend it, but we will not be enriched by it, nor be any better than the worst of our fellows.

Well, this is what may be called the monk's way of rejecting the arts, whether he be Christian monk, or Buddhist ascetic, or ancient philosopher. I believe he is wrong, but I cannot call him enemy. Sometimes I can't help thinking, Who knows but what the whole world may come to that for a little? the field of art may have to lie fallow a while that the weeds may be known for what they are, and be burnt in the end.

I say that I have at least respect for the dwellers in the tub of Diogenes; indeed I don't look upon it as so bad a house after all. With a plane-tree and a clear brook near it, and some chance of daily bread and onions, it will do well enough. I have seen worse houses to let for £700 a year. But, mind you, it must be the real thing. The tub of Diogenes lined with padded drab velvet, lighted by gas, polished and cleaned by vicarious labour, and expecting every morning due visits from the milk-

man, the baker, the butcher, and the fishmonger, that is a cynical dwelling which I cannot praise. If we are to be excused for rejecting the arts, it must be not because we are contented to be less than men, but because we long to be more than men.

For I have said that there are some rejecters of the arts who are corrupters of civilisation. Indeed, they do not altogether reject them; they will eat them and drink them and wear them, and use them as lackeys to eke out their grandeur, and as nets to catch money with, but nothing will they learn or care about them. They will push them to the utmost as far as the satisfying of their material needs go, they will increase the labour infinitely that produces material comfort, but they will reach no helping hand to that which makes labour tolerable; and they themselves are but a part of the crowd that toils without an aim; for they themselves labour with tireless energy to multiply the race of man, and then make the multitude unhappy. Therefore let us pity them, that they have been born coarse, violent, unjust, inhuman;—let us pity them, yet resist them.

For these things they do unwitting indeed, but are none the less oppressors—oppressors of the arts, and

therefore of the people, who have a right to the solace which the arts alone can give to the life of simple men. Well, these men are, singly or in combination, the rich and powerful of the world; they rule civilisation at present, and if it were not through ignorance that they err, those who see the fault and lament it would indeed have no choice but to reject all civilisation with the ascetic; but since they are led astray unwittingly, there is belike a better way to resist their oppression than by mere renunciation. I say that if there were no other way of resisting those oppressors of the people—whom we call in modern slang “Philistines”—save the monk’s or ascetic’s way, that is the way all honest men would have to take, whose eyes were opened to the evil. But there is another way of resistance, which I shall ask your leave to call the citizen’s way, who says: There is a vast deal of labour spent in supplying civilised man with things which he has come to consider needful, and which, as a rule, he will not do without. Much of that labour is grievous and oppressive; but since there is much more of grievous labour in the world than there used to be, it is clear that there is more than there need be, and more than there will be in time to come, if only men of goodwill look to it; what therefore can we do

towards furthering that good time and reducing the amount of grievous labour ; first, by abstaining from multiplying our material wants unnecessarily ; and secondly, by doing our best to introduce the elements of hope and pleasure into all the labour with which we have anything to do ?

These, I think, are the principles on which the citizen's resistance to Philistine oppression must be founded ; to do with as few things as we can, and, as far as we can, to see to it that these things are the work of freemen and not of slaves ; these two seem to me to be the main duties to be fulfilled by those who wish to live a life at once free and refined, serviceable to others, and pleasant to themselves.

Now it is clear that if we are to fulfil these duties we must take active interest in the arts of life which supply men's material needs, and know something about them, so that we may be able to distinguish slaves' work from freemen's, and to decide what we may accept and what we must renounce of the wares that are offered to us as necessities and comforts of life. It is to help you to a small fragment of this necessary knowledge that I am standing before you with this word in my mouth, the Lesser Arts of Life. Of course it is only on a few of these that I have anything to say to you, but of those

that I shall speak I believe I know something, either as a workman or a very deeply interested onlooker ; wherefore I shall ask your leave to speak quite plainly and without fear or favour.

You understand that our ground is, that not only is it possible to make the matters needful to our daily life works of art, but that there is something wrong in the civilisation that does not do this : if our houses, our clothes, our household furniture and utensils are not works of art, they are either wretched make-shifts, or what is worse, degrading shams of better things.

Furthermore, if any of these things make any claim to be considered works of art, they must show obvious traces of the hand of man guided directly by his brain, without more interposition of machines than is absolutely necessary to the nature of the work done.

Again, whatsoever art there is in any of these articles of daily use must be evolved in a natural and unforced manner from the material that is dealt with : so that the result will be such as could not be got from any other material : if we break this law we shall make a triviality, a toy, not a work of art.

Lastly, love of nature in all its forms must be the

ruling spirit of such works of art as we are considering ; the brain that guides the hand must be healthy and hopeful, must be keenly alive to the surroundings of our own days, and must be only so much affected by the art of past times as it is natural for one who practises an art which is alive, growing, and looking toward the future.

Asking you to keep these principles in mind, I will now, with your leave, pass briefly over the Lesser Arts with which I myself am conversant.

Yet, first, I must mention an art which, though it ministers to our material needs, and therefore, according to what I have said as to the division between purely spiritual and partly material arts, should be reckoned among the Lesser Arts, has, to judge by its etymology, not been so reckoned in times past, for it has been called Architecture ; nevertheless, it does practically come under the condemnation of those who despise the lesser or more material arts ; so please allow me to reckon it among them.

Now, speaking of the whole world and at all times, it would not be quite correct to say that the other arts could not exist without it ; because there both have been, and are large and important races of mankind who, properly speaking, have no architecture, who are not house-dwellers but tent-dwellers,

and who, nevertheless, are by no means barren of the arts.

For all that it is true that these non-architectural races (let the Chinese stand as a type of them) have no general mastery over the arts, and seem to play with them rather than to try to put their souls into them. Clumsy-handed as the European or Aryan workman is (of a good period, I mean) as compared with his Turanian fellow, there is a seriousness and meaning about his work that raises it as a piece of art far above the deftness of China and Japan ; and it is this very seriousness and depth of feeling which, when brought to bear upon the matters of our daily life, is in fact the soul of Architecture, whatever the body may be ; so that I shall still say that among ourselves, the men of modern Europe, the existence of the other arts is bound up with that of Architecture. Please do not forget that, whatever else I may say to-day, you must suppose me to assume that we have noble buildings which we have to adorn with our lesser arts : for this art of building is the true democratic art, the child of the man-inhabited earth, the expression of the life of man thereon. I claim for our Society no less a position than this, than in calling on you to reverence the examples of noble building, and to understand and protect the con-

tinuity of its history, it is guarding the very springs of all art, of all cultivation.

Now I would not do this noble art such disrespect as to speak of it in detail as only a part of a subject. I would not treat it so even in its narrower sense as the art of building; its wider sense I consider to mean the art of creating a building with all the appliances fit for carrying on a dignified and happy life. The arts I have to speak of in more detail are a part, and comparatively a small part, of Architecture considered in that light; but there is so much to be said even about these, when we have once made up our mind that they are worth our attention at all, that you must understand that my talk to-night will simply be hints to draw your attention to the subjects in question.

I shall try, then, to give you some hints on these arts or crafts—pottery and glass-making; weaving, with its necessary servant dyeing; the craft of printing patterns (*a*) on cloth, (*b*) on paper; furniture; and also, with fear and trembling, I will say a word on the art of dress. Some of these are lesser arts with a vengeance; only you see I happen to know something about them practically, and so venture to speak of them.

So let us begin with pottery, the most ancient and

universal, as it is perhaps (setting aside house-building) the most important of the lesser arts, and one, too, the consideration of which recommends itself to us from a more or less historical point of view, because, owing to the indestructibility of its surface, it is one of the few domestic arts of which any specimens are left to us of the ancient and classical times.

Now all nations, however barbarous, have made pottery, sometimes of shapes obviously graceful, sometimes with a mingling of wild grotesquery amid gracefulness; but none have ever failed to make it on true principles, none have made shapes ugly or base till quite modern times. I should say that the making of ugly pottery was one of the most remarkable inventions of our civilisation.

All nations with any turn for art have speedily discovered what capabilities for producing beautiful form lie in the making of an earthen pot of the commonest kind, and what opportunities it offers for the reception of swift and unlaborious, but rich ornament; and how nothing hinders that ornament from taking the form of representation of history and legend. In favour of this art the classical nations relaxed the artistic severity that insisted elsewhere on perfection of Figure-drawing in archi-

tectural work ; and we may partly guess what an astonishing number there must have been of capable and ready draughtsmen in the good times of Greek Art from the great mass of first rate painting on pottery, garnered from the tombs mostly, and still preserved in our museums after all these centuries of violence and neglect.

Side by side with the scientific and accomplished work of the Greeks, and begun much earlier than the earliest of it, was being practised another form of the art in Egypt and the Euphrates valley ; it was less perfect in the highest qualities of design, but was more elaborate in technique, which elaboration no doubt was forced into existence by a craving for variety and depth of colour and richness of decoration, which did not press heavily on the peoples of the classical civilisation, who, masters of form as they were, troubled themselves but little about the refinements of colour. This art has another interest for us in the fact that from it sprang up all the great school of pottery which has flourished in the East, apart from the special and peculiar work of China.

Though the fictile art of that country is a development of so much later date than what we have just been considering, let us make a note of it here

as the third kind of potter's work, which no doubt had its origin in the exploitation of local material joined to the peculiar turn of the Chinese workman for *finesse* of manual skill and for boundless patience.

Northern Europe during the Middle Ages, including our own country, could no more do without a native art of pottery than any other simple peoples; but the work done by them being very rough, and serving for the commonest domestic purposes (always with the exception of certain tile-work), had not the chance of preservation which superstition gave to the Greek pottery, and very little of it is left; that little shows us that our Gothic forefathers shared the pleasure in the potter's wheel and the capabilities of clay for quaint and pleasant form and fanciful invention which has been common to most times and places, and this rough craft even lived on as a village art till almost the days of our grandfathers, turning out worthy work enough, done in a very unconscious and simple fashion on the old and true principles of art, side by side with the whims and inanities which mere fashion had imposed on so-called educated people.

Every one of these forms of art, with many another which I have no time to speak of, was good

in itself; the general principles of them may be expressed somewhat as follows:—

1. Your vessel must be of a convenient shape for its purpose.

2. Its shape must show to the greatest advantage the plastic and easily-worked nature of clay; the lines of its contour must flow easily; but you must be on the look-out to check the weakness and languidness that comes from striving after over-elegance.

3. All the surface must show the hand of the potter, and not be finished with a baser tool.

4. Smoothness and high finish of surface, though a quality not to be despised, is to be sought after as a means for gaining some special elegance of ornament, and not as an end for its own sake.

5. The commoner the material the rougher the ornament, but by no means the scantier; on the contrary, a pot of fine materials may be more slightly ornamented, both because all the parts of the ornamentation will be minuter, and also because it will in general be considered more carefully.

6. As in the making of the pot, so in its surface ornament, the hand of the workman must be always visible in it; it must glorify the necessary tools and necessary pigment: swift and decided

execution is necessary to it; whatever delicacy there may be in it must be won in the teeth of the difficulties that will result from this; and because of these difficulties the delicacy will be more exquisite and delightful than in easier arts where, so to say, the execution can wait for more laborious patience.

These, I say, seem to me the principles that guided the potter's art in the days when it was progressive: it began to cease to be so in civilised countries somewhat late in that period of blight which was introduced by the so-called Renaissance. Excuse a word or two more of well-known history in explanation.

Our own pottery of Northern Europe, made doubtless without any reference to classical models, was very rude, as I have said; it was fashioned of natural clay, glazed when necessary transparently with salt or lead, and the ornament on it was done with another light-coloured clay, sometimes coloured further with metallic oxides under the glaze. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the more finished work, which had its origin, as before mentioned, in Egypt and the Euphrates valley, was introduced into Southern Europe through Moorish or rather Arab

Spain, and other points of contact between Europe and the East. This ware, known now as Majolica, was of an earthen body covered with opaque white glaze, ornamented with colours formed of oxides, some of which were by a curious process reduced into a metallic state, giving thereby strange and beautiful lustrous colours.

This art quickly spread through Italy, and for a short time was practised there with very great success, but was not much taken up by the nations of Northern Europe, who for the most part went on making the old lead or salt glazed earthenware; the latter, known as Grés de Cologne, still exists as a rough manufacture in the border lands of France and Germany, though I should think it is not destined to live much longer otherwise than as a galvanised modern antique.

When Italy was still turning out fine works in the Majolica wares much of the glory of the Renaissance was yet shining; but the last flicker of that glory had died out by the time that another form of Eastern art invaded our European pottery. Doubtless the folly of the time would have found another instrument for destroying whatever of genuine art was left among our potters if it had not had the work of China ready to hand, but it came to

pass that this was the instrument that finally made nonsense of the whole craft among us. True it is that a very great proportion of the Chinese work imported consisted of genuine works of art of their kind, though mostly much inferior to the work of Persia, Damascus, or Granada; but the fact is it was not the art in it that captivated our forefathers, but its grosser and more material qualities—the whiteness of the paste, the hardness of the glaze, the neatness of the painting, and the consequent delicacy, or luxuriousness rather, of the ware, were the qualities that the eighteenth century potters strove so hard to imitate. They were indeed valuable qualities in the hands of a Chinaman, deft as he was of execution, fertile of design, fanciful though not imaginative; in short, a born maker of pretty toys; but such daintinesses were of little avail to a good workman of our race,—eager, impatient, imaginative, with something of melancholy or moroseness even in his sport, his very jokes two-edged and fierce, he had other work to do, if his employers but knew it, than the making of toys.

Well, but in the time we have before us the workman was but thought of as a convenient machine, and this machine, driven by the haphazard whims of the time, produced at Meissen, at

Sèvres, at Chelsea, at Derby, and in Staffordshire, a most woeful set of works of art, of which perhaps those of Sèvres were the most repulsively hideous, those of Meissen (at their worst) the most barbarous, and those made in England the stupidest, though it may be the least ugly.

Now this is very briefly the history of the art of pottery down to our own times, when styleless anarchy prevails; a state of things not so hopeless as in the last century, because it shows a certain uneasiness as to whether we are right or wrong, which may be a sign of life. Meanwhile, as to matters of art, the craft which turns out such tons of commercial wares, every piece of which ought to be a work of art, produces almost literally nothing. On this dismal side of things I will not dwell, but will ask you to consider with me what can be done to remedy it; a question which I know exercises much many excellent and public-spirited men who are at the head of pottery works.

Well, in the first place, it is clear that the initiative cannot be wholly taken by these men; we, all of us I mean who care about the arts, must help them by asking for the right thing, and making them quite clear what it is we ask for. To my mind it should be something like this, which is but

another way of putting those principles of the art which I spoke of before:—

1st, No vessel should be fashioned by being pressed into a mould that can be made by throwing on the wheel, or otherwise by hand.

2d, All vessels should be finished on the wheel, not turned in a lathe, as is now the custom. How can you expect to have good workmen when they know that whatever surface their hands may put on the work will be taken off by a machine?

3d, It follows, as a corollary to the last point, that we must not demand excessive neatness in pottery, and this more especially in cheap wares. Workmanlike finish is necessary, but finish to be workmanlike must always be in proportion to the kind of work. What we get in pottery at present is mechanical finish, not workmanlike, and is as easy to do as the other is hard: one is a matter of a manager's system, the other comes of constant thought and trouble on the part of the men, who by that time are artists, as we call them.

4th, As to the surface decoration on pottery, it is clear it must never be printed; for the rest, it would take more than an hour to go even very briefly into the matter of painting on pottery; but one rule we have for a guide, and whatever we do if we

abide by it, we are quite sure to go wrong if we reject it: and it is common to all the lesser arts. Think of your material. Don't paint anything on pottery save what can be painted only on pottery; if you do, it is clear that however good a draughtsman you may be, you do not care about that special art. You can't suppose that the Greek wall-painting was anything like their painting on pottery—there is plenty of evidence to show that it was not. Or, take another example from the Persian art; it is easy for those conversant with it to tell from an outline tracing of a design whether it was done for pottery-painting or for other work.

5th, Finally, when you have asked for these qualities from the potters, and even in a very friendly way Boycotted them a little till you get them, you will of course be prepared to pay a great deal more for your pottery than you do now, even for the rough work you may have to take. I'm sure that won't hurt you; we shall only have less and break less, and our incomes will still be the same.

Now as to the kindred art of making glass vessels. It is on much the same footing as the potter's craft. Never till our own day has an ugly or stupid glass vessel been made; and no wonder,

considering the capabilities of the art. In the hands of a good workman the metal is positively alive, and is, you may say, coaxing him to make something pretty. Nothing but commercial enterprise capturing an unlucky man and setting him down in the glass-maker's chair with his pattern beside him (which I should think must generally have been originally designed by a landscape gardener)—nothing but this kind of thing could turn out ugly glasses. This stupidity will never be set right till we give up demanding accurately-gauged glasses made by the gross. I am fully in earnest when I say that if I were setting about getting good glasses made, I would get some good workmen together, tell them the height and capacity of the vessels I wanted, and perhaps some general idea as to kind of shape, and then let them do their best. Then I would sort them out as they came from the annealing arches (what a pleasure that would be!) and I would put a good price on the best ones, for they would be worth it; and I don't believe that the worst would be bad.

In speaking of glass-work, it is a matter of course that I am only thinking of that which is blown and worked by hand; moulded and cut glass may have commercial, but can't have artistic value.

As to the material of the glass vessels, that is a very important point. Modern managers have worked very hard to get their glass colourless: it does not seem to me that they have quite succeeded. I should say that their glass was cold and bluish in colour; but whether or not, their aim was wrong. A slight tint is an advantage in the metal, so are slight specks and streaks, for these things make the form visible. The modern managers of glassworks have taken enormous pains to get rid of all colour in their glass; to get it so that when worked into a vessel it shall not show any slightest speck or streak; in fact, they have toiled to take all character out of the metal, and have succeeded; and this in spite of the universal admiration for the Venice glass of the seventeenth century, which is both specked and streaky, and has visible colour in it. This glass of Venice or Murano is most delicate in its form, and was certainly meant quite as much for ornament as use; so you may be sure that if the makers of it had seen any necessity for getting more mechanical perfection in their metal they would have tried for it and got it; but like all true artists they were contented when they had a material that served the purpose of their special craft, and would not weary themselves in seeking

after what they did not want. And I feel sure that if they had been making glass for ordinary table use at a low price, and which ran more risks of breakage, as they would have had to fashion their vessels thicker and less daintily they would have been contented with a rougher metal than that which they used. Such a manufacture yet remains to be set on foot, and I very much wish it could be done ; only it must be a *manufacture* ; must be done by hand, and not by machine, human or otherwise.

So much, and very briefly, of these two important Lesser Arts, which it must be admitted are useful, even to Diogenes, since the introduction of tea : I have myself at a pinch tried a tin mug for tea, and found it altogether inconvenient, and a horn I found worse still ; so, since we must have pottery and glass, and since it is only by an exertion of the cultivated intellect that they can be made ugly, I must needs wish that we might take a little less trouble in that direction : at the same time I quite understand that in this case both the goods would cost the consumers more, even much more, and that the capitalists who risk their money in keeping the manufactories of the goods going would make less money ; both which things to my mind would be fruitful in benefits to the community.

The next craft I have to speak of is that of Weaving : not so much of an art as pottery and glass-making, because so much of it must be mechanical, engaged in the making of mere plain cloth ; of which side of it all one need say is that we should have as little plain cloth made as we conveniently can, and for that reason should insist on having it made well and solidly, and of good materials ; the other side of it, that which deals with figure - weaving, must be subdivided into figure-weaving which is carried out mechanically, and figure-weaving which is altogether a handicraft.

As to the first of these, its interest is limited by the fact that it is mechanical ; since the manner of doing it has with some few exceptions varied little for many hundred years : such trivial alterations as the lifting the warp-threads by means of the Jacquard machine, or throwing the shuttle by steam-power, ought not to make much difference in the art of it, though I cannot say that they have not done so. On the other hand, though mechanical, it produces very beautiful things, which an artist cannot disregard, and man's ingenuity and love of beauty may be made obvious enough in it ; neither do I call the figure-weaver's craft a dull one, if he be

set to do things which are worth doing : to watch the web growing day by day almost magically, in anticipation of the time when it is to be taken out and one can see it on the right side in all its well-schemed beauty ; to make something beautiful that will last, out of a few threads of silk and wool, seems to me not an unpleasant way of earning one's livelihood, so long only as one lives and works in a pleasant place, with work-day not too long, and a book or two to be got at.

However, since this is admittedly a mechanical craft, I have not much to say of it, since it is not my business this evening to speak of the designs for its fashioning : this much one may say, that as the designing of woven stuffs fell into degradation in the latter days, the designers got fidgeting after trivial novelties ; change for the sake of change ; they must needs strive to make their woven flowers look as if they were painted with a brush, or even sometimes as if they were drawn by the engraver's burin. This gave them plenty of trouble and exercised their ingenuity in the tormenting of their web with spots and stripes and ribs and the rest of it, but quite destroyed the seriousness of the work, and even its *raison d'être*. As of pottery-painting, so of figure-weaving : do nothing in it but that which only

weaving can do : and to this end make your design as elaborate as you please in silhouette, but carry it out simply ; you are not drawing lines freely with your shuttle, you are building up a pattern with a fine rectilinear mosaic. If this is kept well in mind by the designer, and he does not try to force his material into no-thoroughfares, he may have abundant pleasure in the making of woven stuffs, and he is perhaps less likely to go wrong (if he has a feeling for colour) in this art than in any other. I will say further that he should be careful to get due proportions between his warp and weft : not to starve the first, which is the body of the web so to say, for the sake of the second, which is its clothes : this is done now-a-days over much by ingenious designers who are trying to make their web look like non-mechanical stuffs, or who want to get a delusive show of solidity in a poor cloth, which is much to be avoided : a similar fault we are too likely to fall into is of a piece with what is done in all the lesser arts to-day ; and which doubtless is much fostered by the ease given to our managers of works by the over-development of machinery : I am thinking of the weaving up of rubbish into apparently delicate and dainty wares. No man, with the true instinct of a workman, should have any-

thing to do with this : it may not mean commercial dishonesty, though I suspect it sometimes does, but it must mean artistic dishonesty : poor materials in this craft, as in all others, should only be used in coarse work, where they are used without pretence for what they are : this we must agree to at once, or sink all art in commerce (so-called) in these crafts.

So much for mechanical figure-weaving. Its *raison-d'être* is that it gives scope to the application of imagination and beauty to any cloth, thick or thin, close or open, costly or cheap ; in some way or other you may weave any of these into figures ; but when we may limit ourselves to certain heavy, close, and very costly cloths we no longer need the help of anything that can fairly be called machine : little more is needed than a frame which will support heavy beams on which we may strain our warp : our work is purely hand-work—we may do what we will according to the fineness of our warp : these are the conditions of carpet and tapestry weaving : meaning by carpets the real thing, such as the East has furnished us with from time immemorial, and not the makeshift imitation woven by means of the Jacquard loom, or otherwise mechanically.

As to the art of carpet-weaving, then, one must say that historically it belongs to the East. I do

not think it has been proved that any piled carpets were made in Europe during the Middle Ages proper, though some writers have thought that a fabric called in edicts of the fourteenth century "*tapisserie sarracenois*," was in fact piled carpet-work : however in the seventeenth century they certainly were being made to a certain extent even in these islands : amongst other examples I have seen some pieces of carpet-work in a Jacobean house in Oxfordshire, which an inventory of about 1620 calls oddly enough "Irish stitch : " but wherever the history of the art may begin among ourselves, I fear it may almost be said to end with the seventeenth century ; there are still a few places where hand-wrought carpets are made, but scarcely anything original is done ; coarsely copied imitations of the Levantine carpets, and a sort of deduction from the degraded follies of the time of Louis XV., traditionally thought to be suitable for the dreary waste of an aristocratic country-house, are nearly all that is turned out at present. Still I do not agree with an opinion, which I have heard expressed, that carpets can only be made in the East : such carpets as have been made there for the last hundred years or so, which are chiefly pieces of nearly formless colour, could not be made satisfactorily and spontaneously by Western

art ; but these carpets, delightful as they are, are themselves the product of a failing art : their prototypes are partly those simple but scientifically designed cloths, whose patterns are founded on the elaborate pavement mosaics of Byzantine art ; and partly they are degradations, traceable by close study, from the elaborate floral art of Persia ; the originals of the first kind may be seen accurately figured in many of the pictures of the palmy days of Italian and Flemish art, and, as I have said, they are designed on scientific principles which any good designer can apply to works of our own day without burdening his conscience with the charge of plagiarism. As to the other kind of the Persian floral designs, there are still a few of these in existence, though, as I have never seen any of them figured in old pictures, I doubt if they found their way to Europe much in the Middle Ages. These, beautiful as they are in colour, are as far as possible from lacking form in design ; they are fertile of imagination and lovely in drawing ; and though imitation of them would carry with it its usual disastrous consequences, they show us the way to set about designing suchlike things, and that a carpet can be made which by no means depends for its success on the mere instinct for colour, which is the last

gift of art to leave certain races. Withal, one thing seems certain, that if we don't set to work making our own carpets it will not be long before we shall find the East fail us: for that last gift, the gift of the sense of harmonious colour, is speedily dying out in the East before the conquests of European rifles and money-bags.

As to the other manufacture of unmechanically woven cloth, the art of tapestry-weaving, it was, while it flourished, not only an art of Europe, but even of Northern Europe. Still more than carpet-weaving, it must be spoken of in the past tense. If you are curious on the subject of its technique you may see that going on as in its earlier, or let us say real, life at the Gobelins at Paris; but it is a melancholy sight: the workmen are as handy at it as only Frenchmen can be at such work, and their skill is traditional too, I have heard; for they are the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of tapestry-weavers. Well, their ingenuity is put to the greatest pains for the least results: it would be a mild word to say that what they make is worthless; it is more than that; it has a corrupting and deadening influence upon all the Lesser Arts of France, since it is always put forward as the very standard and crown of all that those arts can do at the best: a

more idiotic waste of human labour and skill it is impossible to conceive. There is another branch of the same stupidity, differing slightly in technique, at Beauvais; and the little town of Aubusson in mid-France has a decaying commercial industry of the like rubbish. I am sorry to have to say that an attempt to set the art going, which has been made, doubtless with the best intentions, under royal patronage at Windsor, within the last few years, has most unluckily gone on the lines of the work at the Gobelins, and if it does not change its system utterly, is doomed to artistic failure, whatever its commercial success may be.

Well, this is all I have to say about the poor remains of the art of tapestry-weaving: and yet what a noble art it was once! To turn our chamber walls into the green woods of "the leafy month of June," populous of bird and beast; or a summer garden with man and maid playing round the fountains, or a solemn procession of the mythical warriors and heroes of old; that surely was worth the trouble of doing, and the money that had to be paid for it: that was no languid acquiescence in an upholsterer's fashion.

How well I remember as a boy my first acquaintance with a room hung with faded greenery at

Queen Elizabeth's Lodge, by Chingford Hatch, in Epping Forest (I wonder what has become of it now ?), and the impression of romance that it made upon me ! a feeling that always comes back on me when I read, as I often do, Sir Walter Scott's *Antiquary*, and come to the description of the Green Room at Monkbarns, amongst which the novelist has with such exquisite cunning of art imbedded the fresh and glittering verses of the summer poet Chaucer : yes, that was more than upholstery, believe me.

Nor must you forget that when the art was at its best, while on the one side it was almost a domestic art, and all sorts of naïve fancies were embodied in it, it took the place in Northern Europe of the fresco painting of Italy ; among the existing easel pictures of the Flemish school of the fifteenth century there are no designs which are equal in conception and breadth of treatment to those which were worked out in tapestry, and I believe that some of the very best Northern artists spent the greater part of their time in designing for this art. Roger van der Weyden of the Cologne school is named as having done much in this way : under the gallery of the great hall at Hampton Court hangs a piece which I suppose is by him, and which at any rate is, taking

it altogether, the finest piece I have seen. There is quite a school of tapestry in the place, by the way : the withdrawing room or solar at the end of the hall is hung with tapestries, but little inferior to the first mentioned and perhaps a little later, but unluckily, unlike it, much obscured by the dirt of centuries (not faded, only dirty), while the main walls of the great hall itself are hung with work of a later date, say about 1580. You may test your taste by comparing these later works (very fine of their kind) with the earlier, and seeing which you like best. I will not try to influence you on this matter, but will only say that the borders of this later tapestry are admirably skilful pieces of execution.

Perhaps you will think I have said too much about an art that has practically perished ; but as there is nothing whatever to prevent us from reviving it if we please, since the technique of it is easy to the last degree, so also it seems to me that in the better days of art the exaltation of certain parts of a craft into the region of the higher arts was both a necessary consequence of the excellence of the craft as a whole, and in return kept up that excellence to its due pitch by example ; the magnificent woven pictures of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were the natural result of the pleasure and

skill that were exercised in the art of weaving in every village and homestead, at the same time that they were an encouragement to the humbler brother of the craft to persevere in doing his best.

I have now to speak of a craft which I daresay some of you will think a lesser art indeed, but which nevertheless we cannot help considering if we are to trouble ourselves at all about the art of weaving. This is the dyer's craft: of which I must say that no craft has been so oppressed by the philistinism of false commerce, or by the ignorance of the public as to their real wants; which oppression is of very late date, and belongs almost wholly to our own days.

I should very much like to be able to tell you the whole story of this ancient craft, but time fails me to give you more than the very barest outline of it.

The ancient Egyptians knew well the niceties of the art. I myself have dyed wool red by the self-same process that the Mosaical dyers used; and from the remotest times the whole art was thoroughly understood in India. If to-day I want for my own use some of the red dye above alluded to, I must send to Argolis or Acharnania for it; and Pliny would have been quite at home in the dye-house of Tintoretto's father (or master); no change at all

befell the art either in the East or the North till after the discovery of America; this gave the dyers one new material in itself good, and one that was doubtful or bad. The good one was the new insect dye, cochineal, which at first was used only for dyeing crimson (or bluish red), and for this use cast into the shade the older red insect dye above alluded to, called by the classical peoples coccus, and by the Arabs Al kermes. The bad new material was log-wood, so fugitive a dye as to be quite worthless as a colour by itself (as it was at first used), and to my mind of very little use otherwise. No other *new* dye-stuff of importance was found in America, although the discoverers came across such abundance of red-dyeing wood growing there that a huge country of South America has thence taken its name of Brazil.

The next change happened about 1630, when a German discovered accidentally how to dye scarlet with cochineal on a tin basis, thereby putting the old dye, kermes, almost wholly out of commerce. Next, in the last years of the eighteenth century, a worthless blue was invented (which I don't name, to avoid confusion in this brief sketch). About the same time a rather valuable yellow dye (quercitron bark) was introduced from America. Next, in 1810,

chemical science, which by this time had got fairly on its legs, began to busy itself about the dyer's craft, and discovered how to dye with Prussian blue, a colour which, as a pigment, had been discovered about eighty years before; this discovery was rather harmful than otherwise to my mind, but was certainly an important one, since before that time there was but one dyeing drug that could give a blue colour capable of standing a week of diffused daylight even,—indigo to wit, whether it was produced from tropical or sub-tropical plants, or from our Northern plant, woad.

Now these novelties, the sum of which amounts to very little, are all that make any difference between the practice of dyeing under Rameses the Great and under Queen Victoria, till about twenty years ago; about that time a series of the most wonderful discoveries were made by the chemists; discoveries which did the utmost credit to their skill, patience, and capacity for scientific research, and which, from a so-called commercial point of view, have been of the greatest importance; for they have, as the phrase goes, revolutionised the art of dyeing. The dye stuffs discovered by the indefatigable genius of scientific chemists, which every one has heard of under the name of aniline colours,

and which are the product of coal-tar, are brighter and stronger in colour than the old dyes, cheaper (much cheaper) in price, and, which is of course of the last importance to the dyer, infinitely easier to use. No wonder, therefore, that they have almost altogether supplanted the older dyes, except in a few cases: surely the invention seems a splendid one!

Well, it is only marred by one fact, that being an invention for the benefit of an art whose very existence depends upon its producing beauty, it is on the road, and far advanced on it, towards destroying all beauty in the art. The fact is, that every one of these colours is hideous in itself, whereas all the old dyes are in themselves beautiful colours—only extreme perversity could make an ugly colour out of them. Under these circumstances it must, I suppose, be considered a negative virtue in the new dyes, that they are as fugitive as the older ones are stable; but even on that head I will ask you to note one thing that condemns them finally, that whereas the old dyes when fading, as all colours will do more or less, simply gradually changed into paler tints of the same colour, and were not unpleasant to look on, the fading of the new dyes is a change into all kinds of abominable and livid hues. I mention this because otherwise it might be thought that a

man with an artistic eye for colour might so blend the hideous but bright aniline colours as to produce at least something tolerable; indeed, this is not unfrequently attempted to-day, but with small success, partly from the reason above mentioned, partly because the hues so produced by "messaging about," as I should call it, have none of the *quality* or character which the simpler drug gives naturally: all artists will understand what I mean by this.

In short, this is what it comes to, that it would be better for us, if we cannot revive the now almost lost art of dyeing, to content ourselves with weaving our cloths of the natural colour of the fibre, or to buy them coloured by less civilised people than ourselves.

Now, really even if you think the art of dyeing as contemptible as Pliny did, you must admit that this is a curious state of things, and worth while considering, even by a philosopher. It is most true that the chemists of our day have made discoveries almost past belief for their wonder; they have given us a set of colours which has made a new thing of the dyer's craft; commercial enterprise has eagerly seized on the gift, and yet, unless all art is to disappear from our woven stuffs, we must turn round and utterly and simply reject it. We must relegate

these new dyes to a museum of scientific curiosities, and for our practice go back, if not to the days of the Pharaohs, yet at least to those of Tintoret.

I say I invite you to consider this, because it is a type of the oppression under which the lesser arts are suffering at the present day.

The art of dyeing leads me naturally to the humble but useful art of printing on cloth; really a very ancient art, since it is not essential to it that the pattern should be printed; it may be painted by hand. Now, the painting of cloth with real dyes was practised from the very earliest days in India; and, since the Egyptians of Pliny's time knew the art well, it is most probable that in that little-changing land it was very old also. Indeed many of the minute and elaborate patterns on the dresses of Egyptian imagery impress me strongly as representing what would naturally be the work of dye-painted linen.

As to the craft among ourselves, it has, as a matter of course, suffered grievously from the degradation of dyeing, and this not only from the worsening of the tints both in beauty and durability, but from a more intricate cause. I have said that the older dyes were much more difficult to use than the modern ones. The processes for getting a many-

coloured pattern on to a piece of cotton, even so short a while back as when I was a boy, were many and difficult. As a rule, this is done in fewer hours now than it was in days then. You may think this a desirable change, but, except on the score of cheapness, I can't agree with you. The natural and healthy difficulties of the old processes, all connected as they were with the endeavour to make the colour stable, drove any designer who had anything in him to making his pattern peculiarly suitable to the whole art, and gave a character to it—that character which you so easily recognise in Indian palampores, or in the faded curtains of our grandmothers' time, which still, in spite of many a summer's sun and many and many a strenuous washing, retain at least their reds and blues. In spite of the rudeness or the extravagance of these things, we are always attracted towards them, and the chief reason is, that we feel at once that there is something about the designs natural to the craft, that they can be done only by the practice of it; a quality which, I must once more repeat, is a necessity for all the designs of the lesser arts. But in the comparatively easy way in which these cloths are printed to-day, there are no special difficulties to stimulate the designer to invention; he can get any design done on his cloth; the

printer will make no objections, so long as the pattern is the right size for his roller, and has only the due number of colours. The result of all this is ornament on the cotton, which might just as well have been printed or drawn on paper, and in spite of any grace or cleverness in the design, it is found to look poor and tame and wiry. That you will see clearly enough when some one has had a fancy to imitate some of the generous and fertile patterns that were once specially designed for the older cloths: it all comes to nothing—it is dull, hard, unsympathetic.

No; there is nothing for it but the trouble and the simplicity of the earlier craft, if you are to have any beauty in cloth-printing at all. And if not, why should we trouble to have a pattern of any sort on our cotton cloths? I for one am dead against it, unless the pattern is really beautiful; it is so very worthless if it is not.

As I have been speaking about printing on cotton cloths, I suppose I am bound to say something also on the quite modern and very humble, but, as things go, useful art of printing patterns on paper for wall-hangings. But really there is not much to be said about it, unless we were considering the arrangement and formation of its patterns; because it is so very free from those difficulties the meeting and conquer-

ing of which give character to the more intricate crafts. I think the real way to deal successfully with designing for paper-hangings is to accept their mechanical nature frankly, to avoid falling into the trap of trying to make your paper look as if it were painted by hand. Here is the place, if anywhere, for dots and lines and hatchings : mechanical enrichment is of the first necessity in it. After that you may be as intricate and elaborate in your pattern as you please ; nay, the more and the more mysteriously you interweave your sprays and stems the better for your purpose, as the whole thing has to be pasted flat on a wall, and the cost of all this intricacy will but come out of your own brain and hand. For the rest, the fact that in this art we are so little helped by beautiful and varying material imposes on us the necessity for being specially thoughtful in our designs ; every one of them must have a distinct idea in it ; some beautiful piece of nature must have pressed itself on our notice so forcibly that we are quite full of it, and can, by submitting ourselves to the rules of art, express our pleasure to others, and give them some of the keen delight that we ourselves have felt. If we cannot do this in some measure our paper design will not be worth much ; it will be but a makeshift expedient for covering a wall with

something or other; and if we really care about art we shall not put up with "something or other," but shall choose honest whitewash instead, on which sun and shadow play so pleasantly, if only our room be well planned and well shaped, and look kindly on us.

A great if indeed; which lands me at once into my next division of the lesser arts, which for want of a better word I will call house-furnishing: I say it lands me there, because if only our houses were built as they should be, we should want such a little furniture—and be so happy in that scantiness. Even as it is, we should at all events take as our maxim the less the better: excess of furniture destroys the repose of a lazy man, and is in the way of an industrious one; and besides, if we really care for art we shall always feel inclined to save on superfluities, that we may have wherewithal to spend on works of art.

Simplicity is the one thing needful in furnishing, of that I am certain; I mean first as to quantity, and secondly as to kind and manner of design; the arrangement of our houses ought surely to express the kind of life we lead, or desire to lead; and to my mind if there is anything to be said in favour of that to-day somewhat well-abused English Middle

Class, it is that, amidst all the narrowness that is more or less justly charged against it, it has a kind of orderly intelligence which is not without some value; such as it is, such its houses ought to be if it takes any pains about them, as I think it should: they should look like part of the life of decent citizens prepared to give good commonplace reasons for what they do: for us to set to work to imitate the minor vices of the Borgias, or the degraded and nightmare whims of the *blasé* and bankrupt French aristocracy of Louis XV.'s time, seems to me merely ridiculous. So I say our furniture should be good citizen's furniture, solid and well made in workmanship, and in design should have nothing about it that is not easily defensible, no monstrosities or extravagances, not even of beauty, lest we weary of it: as to matters of construction, it should not have to depend on the special skill of a very picked workman, or the superexcellence of his glue, but be made on the proper principles of the art of joinery: also I think that, except for very movable things like chairs, it should not be so very light as to be nearly imponderable; it should be made of timber rather than walking-sticks. Moreover, I must needs think of furniture as of two kinds: one part of it being chairs, dining and working tables, and the

like, the necessary work-a-day furniture in short, which should be of course both well made and well proportioned, but simple to the last degree; nay, if it were rough I should like it the better, not the worse; with work-a-day furniture like this we should among other blessings avoid the terror which now too often goes with the tolerably regularly recurring accidents of the week.

But besides this kind of furniture, there is the other kind of what I should call state-furniture, which I think is proper even for a citizen; I mean side-boards, cabinets, and the like, which we have quite as much for beauty's sake as for use; we need not spare ornament on these, but may make them as elegant and elaborate as we can with carving, inlaying, or painting; these are the blossoms of the art of furniture, as picture-tapestry is of the art of weaving: but these also should not be scattered about the house at haphazard, but should be used architecturally to dignify important chambers and important places in them.

And once more; whatever you have in your rooms think first of the walls; for they are that which makes your house and home; and if you don't make some sacrifice in their favour, you will find your chambers have a kind of makeshift, lodging-

house look about them, however rich and handsome your movables may be.

The last of the Lesser Arts I have to speak of I come to with some trepidation; but it is so important to one half of the race of civilised mankind, the male half, that I will venture: indeed I speak of the art of dress with the more terror because civilisation has settled for us males that art shall have no place in our clothes, and that we must in this matter occupy the unamiable position of critics of our betters; rebel as I am, I bow to that decision, though I find it difficult to admit that a chimney-pot hat or a tail-coat is the embodiment of wisdom in clothes-philosophy; and sometimes in my more sceptical moments I puzzle myself in thinking *why*, when I am indoors, I should wear two coats, one with a back and no front, and the other with a front and no back: however, I have not near enough courage even to suggest a rebellion against these stern sartorial laws; and after all one can slip into and out of the queer things with great ease, and that being the case, it is far more important to me what other people wear than what I wear: so that I ask leave to be an irresponsible critic for a few moments.

Now I have lived through at least two periods of feminine dress, without counting the present one, which I perceive with some terror is trembling on the verge of change: yes, with terror, because for a good many years past, in spite of a few extravagancies, the dress of ladies in England has been highly satisfactory, and very consolatory for the mishaps that have befallen the lesser arts otherwise.

Under these circumstances, both for the sake of the hope and the warning that may lie in it, I will venture to call to your memory what has befallen the art of dress in modern times.

The days of Louis XV. draw across our path a kind of enchanted wood of abominations into which we need not venture: out of those horrors costume escaped into a style that was really graceful and simple in the years that came just before the French Revolution. What this costume really was you can see as clearly as anywhere in the engravings designed by the quaint and fertile book illustrator, the Pole Chodowieski, whose works were much imitated by our Stothard. Then came a period when dress was influenced by the affectation of imitating the art and manners of the classical times, which produced under the First Napoleon a costume charac-

terised by somewhat of an exaggeration of slim gracefulness amongst other extravagancies ; for which affectations a dire revenge was lying in wait, the result of which, after a doubtful time between the dates of the Battle of Waterloo and the accession of Queen Victoria, was a style which one may call that of grim modern respectability : into the middle of that period I was born, and well I remember its horrors. If you can get at an *Illustrated London News* of about the time of the Queen's visit to Louis Philippe, look at the costumes in it ; they will give you cause for serious reflection : or for an earlier example (I think) take up your *Oliver Twist*, with George Cruikshank's illustrations, and contemplate on the effigy there figured of that insipid person Miss Rose Maylie.¹

Well, that was the first period I have seen ; on this period gradually crept another, which, at its height at least, could not be accused of over-much love of respectability : this period was that of crinoline. The woodcuts of John Leech give you admirable illustrations of all the stages of this period. It conquered something from its predecessor in that on the whole it allowed women to arrange their

¹ I do not mean any disrespect to Dickens, of whom I am a humble worshipper.

hair naturally and gracefully ; but in everything else mere blatant vulgarity was apparently what it aimed at. I have good hopes that one may say that the degradation of costume reached its lowest depth in this costume of the Second Empire.¹

This is the second period of costume that I have seen, and its end brings us to the beginning of things as they are ; when woman's dress is or may be on the whole graceful and sensible—please note that I say it *may be*—for the most hopeful sign of the present period is its freedom : in the two previous periods there was no freedom ; in that of grim respectability a lady was positively under well-understood penalties not allowed to dress gracefully. she could not do it ; under the reign of crinoline if she had dressed simply and beautifully,—like a lady, in short, she would have been hooted in the streets : but now-a-days, and for years past, a lady may dress quite simply and beautifully and yet not be noticed as having anything peculiar or theatrical in her costume. Extravagancies of fashion have not been lacking to us, but no one has been compelled to adopt them ; every one might dress herself in the

¹ Indeed I *hope* so ; but since this Lecture was delivered, unhappy tokens are multiplying that fine ladies are determined to try whether ugliness may not be more attractive than beauty.

way which her own good sense told her suited her best. Now this, ladies, is the first and greatest necessity of rational and beautiful costume, that you should keep your liberty of choice; so I beg you to battle stoutly for it, or we shall all tumble into exploded follies again.

Then next, your only chance of keeping that liberty is, to resist the imposition on costume of unnatural monstrosities. Garments should veil the human form, and neither caricature it, nor obliterate its lines: the body should be draped, and neither sewn up in a sack, nor stuck in the middle of a box: drapery, properly managed, is not a dead thing, but a living one, expressive of the endless beauty of motion; and if this be lost, half the pleasure of the eyes in common life is lost. You must specially bear this in mind, because the fashionable milliner has chiefly one end in view, how to hide and degrade the human body in the most expensive manner. She (or he) would see no beauty in the Venus of Milo; she (or he) looks upon you as scaffolds on which to hang a bundle of cheap rags, which can be sold dear under the name of a dress. Now, ladies, if you do not resist this to the bitter end, costume is ruined again, and all we males are rendered inexpressibly unhappy. So I beg of you fervently

do not allow yourselves to be upholstered like arm-chairs, but drape yourselves like women.

Lastly, and this is really part of the same counsel, resist change for the sake of change; this is the very bane of all the arts. I say resist this stupidity, and the care of dress duly subordinated to other duties, is a serious duty to you; but if you do not resist it, the care of dress becomes a frivolous waste of time. It follows, from the admission of this advice, that you should insist on having materials for your dresses that are excellent of their kind, and beautiful of their kind, and that when you have a dress of even moderately costly materials, you won't be in a hurry to see the end of it. This is a thing too which will help us weavers, body and soul, and in a due and natural way: not like the too good-natured way of my Lady Bective, who wants you to wear stiff alpaca, so that the Bradford capitalists may not have to change their machinery. I can't agree to that; if they *will* weave ugly cloth, let them take the consequences.

But one good thing breeds another, and most assuredly a steadiness in fashion, when a good fashion has been attained to, and a love of beautiful things for their own sakes and not because they are novelties, is both human, reasonable, and civilised,

and will help the maker of wares, both master and man, and give them also time to think of beautiful things, and thus to raise their lives to a higher level.

Thus I have named a certain number of the lesser arts, which I must ask you to take as representing the whole mass of them: now all these arts, since they at all events make a show of life, one may suppose civilisation considers desirable, if not necessary; but if they are to go on existing and to occupy in one way or other the lives of millions of men, it seems to me that their life should be real, that the necessity for them should be felt by those that allow them to be carried on; for surely wasted labour is a heavy burden for the world to bear.

I have said that, on the other hand, I am ready to accept the conclusion that these arts are vain and should not be carried on at all; that we should do nothing that we can help doing beyond what is barely necessary to keep ourselves alive, that we may contemplate the mystery of life, and be ready to accept the mystery of death. Yes, that might be agreed to, if the world would; but, you see, it will not: man's life is too complex, too unmanageable at the hands of any unit of the race for such a conclusion to be come to, except by a very few, better

—or it may be worse—than their fellows; and even they will be driven to it by noting the contrast between their aspirations and the busy and inconsistent lives of other men. I mean, if most men lived reasonably, and with justice to their fellows, no men would be drawn towards asceticism.

No, the lesser arts of life must be practised, that is clear. It only remains therefore for us to determine whether they shall but minister to our material needs, receiving no stimulus and no help from the cravings of our souls, or whether they shall really form part of our lives material and spiritual, and be so helpful and natural, that even the sternest philosopher may look upon them kindly and feel helped by them.

Is it possible that civilisation can determine to brutalise the crafts of life by cutting them off from the intellectual part of us? Surely not in the long run; and yet I know that the progress of the race from barbarism to civilisation has hitherto had a tendency to make our lives more and more complex; to make us more dependent one upon the other, and to destroy individuality, which is the breath of life to art; but swiftly and without check as this tendency has grown, I know I cannot be alone in doubting if it has been an unmixed good to us, or

in believing that a change will come, perhaps after some great disaster has chilled us into pausing, and so given us time for reflection: anyhow, in some way or other, I believe the day is not so far distant when the best of men will set to work trying to simplify life on a new basis — when the organisation of labour will mean something else than the struggle of the strong to use each one to his best advantage the necessities and miseries of the weak.

Meanwhile I believe that it will speed the coming of that day if we do but look open-eyed at art and with all sincerity; I want an end of believing that we believe in art-bogies; I want the democracy of the arts established: I want every one to think for himself about them, and not to take things for granted from hearsay; every man to do what he thinks right, not in anarchical fashion, but feeling that he is responsible to his fellows for what he feels, thinks, and has determined.

In these lesser arts every one should say: I have such or such an ornamental matter, not because I am told to like it, but because I like it myself, and I will have nothing that I don't like—nothing; and I can give you my reasons for rejecting this, and accepting that, and am ready to abide by them, and to take the consequences of my being right or

wrong. Of course such independence must spring from knowledge, not from ignorance, and you may be sure that this kind of independence would be far from destroying the respect due to the higher intellects that busy themselves with the arts ; on the contrary, it would make that respect the stronger, since those who had themselves got to think seriously about the arts would understand the better what difficulties beset the greatest men in their struggles to express what is in them. Anyhow, if this intelligent, sympathetic, and serious independence of thought about the arts does not become general among cultivated men (and all men ought to be cultivated) it is a matter of course that the practice of the arts must fall into the hands of a degraded and despised class, degraded and despised at least as far as its daily work goes ; that is to say, the greater part of its waking hours.

Surely this is a serious danger to our political and social advancement, to our cultivation, to our civilisation, in short ; surely we can none of us be content to accept the responsibility of creating such a class of pariahs, or to sit quiet under the burden of its existence, if it exist at present, as indeed it does.

Therefore I ask you to apply the remedy of refusing to be ignorant and nose-led about the arts ;

I ask you to learn what you want and to ask for it ; in which case you will both get it and will breed intelligent and worthy citizens for the common weal ; defenders of society, friends for yourselves.

Is not this worth doing ? It will add to the troubles of life. Maybe ; I will not say nay. Yet consider after all that the life of a man is more troublous than that of a swine, and the life of a free-man than the life of a slave ; and take your choice accordingly.

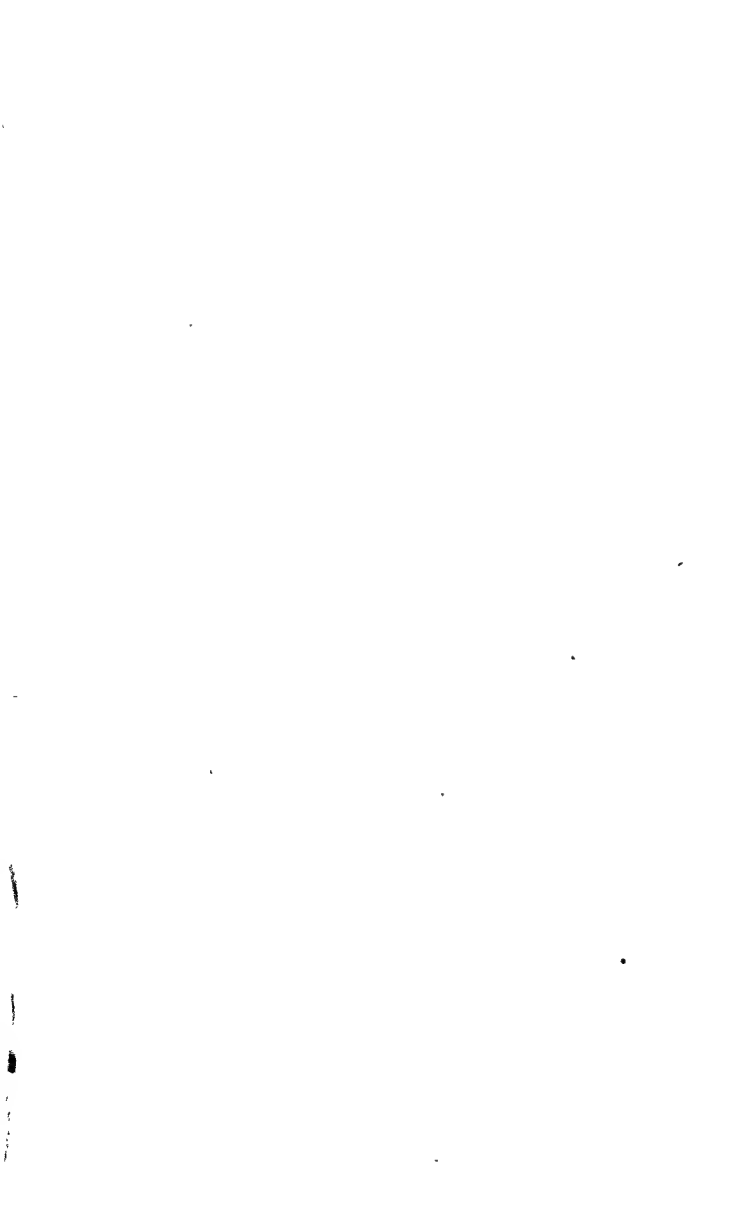
Moreover, if I am right in these matters, your trouble will be shifted, not increased : we shall take pains indeed concerning things which we care about, hard and bitter pains maybe, yet with an end in view ; but the confused, aimless, and for ever unrewarded pains which we now so plentifully take about things we do *not* care about, we shall sweep all that away, and so shall win calmer rest and more strenuous, less entangled work.

What other blessings are there in life save these two,—fearless rest and hopeful work ? Troublous as life is, it has surely given to each one of us here some times and seasons when, surrounded by simple and beautiful things, we have really felt at rest ; when the earth and all its plenteous growth, and the tokens of the varied life of men, and the very

sky and waste of air above us, have seemed all to conspire together to make us calm and happy, not slothful but restful. Still oftener belike it has given us those other times when at last after many a struggle with incongruous hindrances our own chosen work has lain before us disentangled from all encumbrances and unrealities, and we have felt that nothing could withhold us, not even ourselves, from doing the work we were born to do, and that we were men and worthy of life.

Such rest, and such work, I earnestly wish for myself and for you, and for all men : to have space and freedom to gain such rest and such work, is the end of politics ; to learn how best to gain it is the end of education ; to learn its inmost meaning is the end of religion.

THE END.



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